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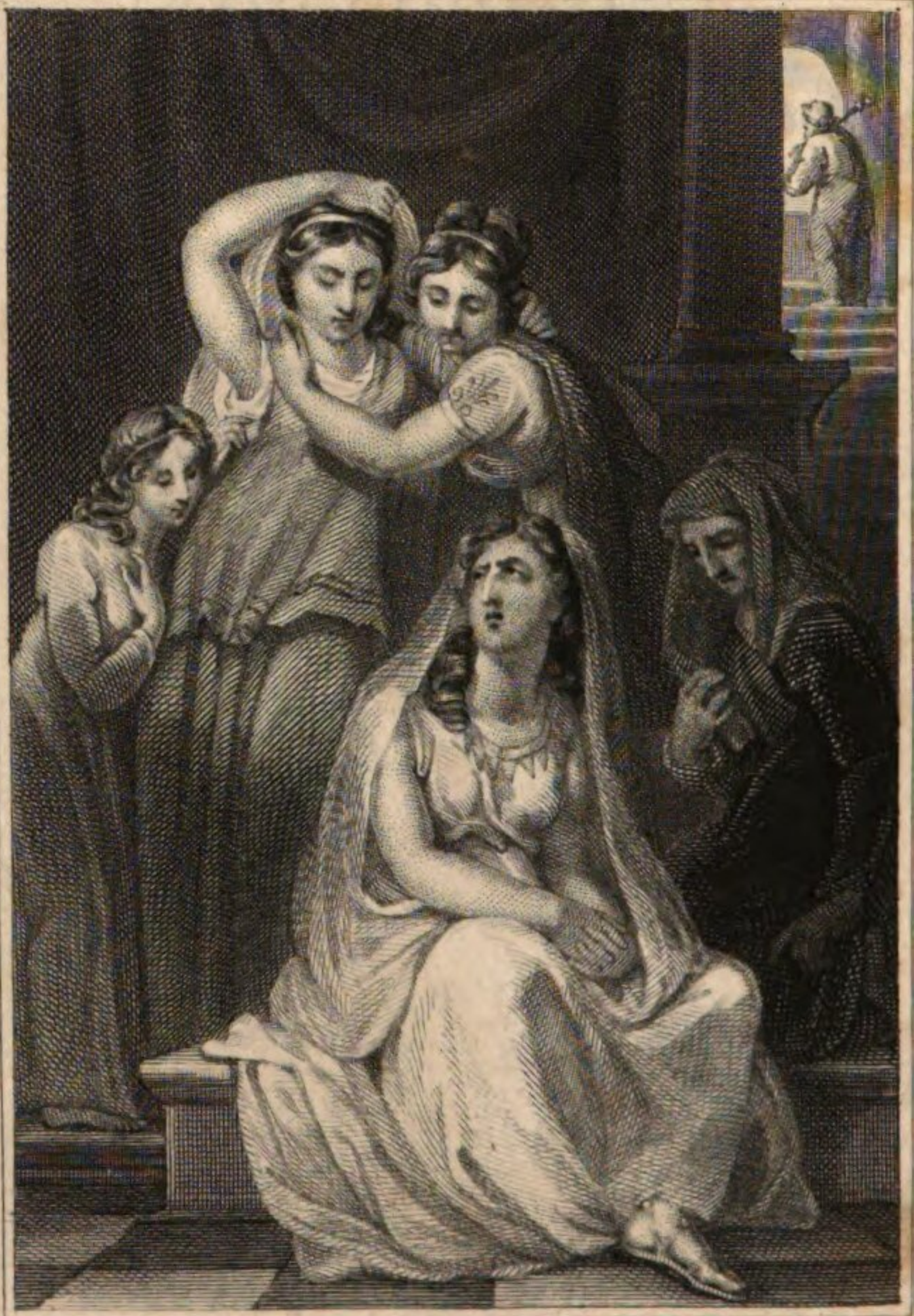
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Tho^d Uwins del.^c

Taylor sculp.^c

none hath e'er receiv'd

Such plenteous sorrow from the Gods as I.
Odyssey 4. l. 872.

Published August 1820, by Baldwin, Cradock & Joy.

THE ODYSSEY
OF
Homer,
translated by
William Comper Esq.



The Twins del.

Taylor sculp.

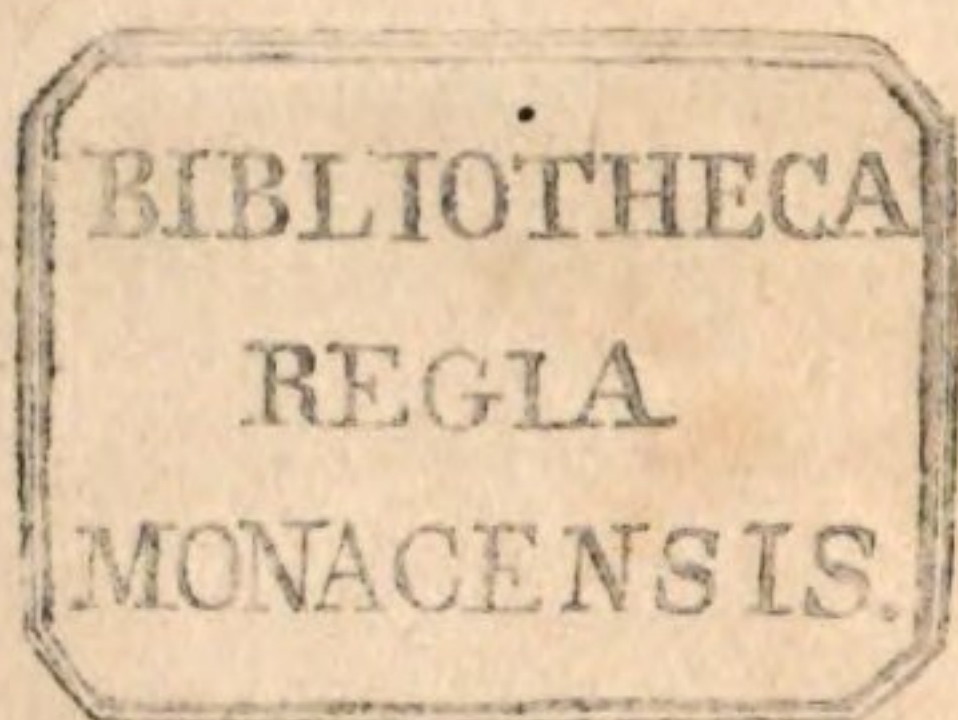
by constraint
Her guest, and from his native land withheld
By sad necessity. *Odyssey* 4. l. 670.

LONDON.

Printed for Baldwin, Cradock & Joy.

1820.

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BIBLIOTHECA

REGIA

MONACENSIS.

THE
ODYSSEY OF HOMER,
TRANSLATED INTO
ENGLISH BLANK VERSE,
WITH NOTES,

BY
WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ.

FIFTH EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR BALDWIN, CRADOCK, AND JOY,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1820.

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MONACENSIS.

C. Baldwin, Printer,
New Bridge-street, London.

THE
ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

BOOK I.

Argument.

In a Council of the Gods, Minerva calls their attention to Ulysses, still a wanderer. They resolve to grant him a safe return to Ithaca. Minerva descends to encourage Telemachus, and in the form of Mentès directs him in what manner to proceed. Throughout this book the extravagance and profligacy of the suitors are occasionally suggested.

MUSE make the man thy theme, for shrewdness
fam'd

And genius versatile; who far and wide
A Wand'rer, after Ilium overthrown,
Discover'd various cities, and the mind
And manners learn'd of men in lands remote.
He num'rous woes, on Ocean toss'd, endur'd,
Anxious to save himself, and to conduct
His foll'wers to their home; yet all his care
Preserv'd them not; they perish'd self-destroy'd
By their own fault; infatuate! who devour'd 10
The oxen of the all-o'erseeing Sun,
And, punish'd for that crime, return'd no more.
Daughter divine of Jove, these things record,
As it may please thee, even in our ears.

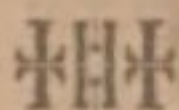
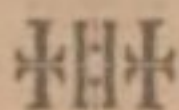
The rest, all those who had perdition 'scap'd
By war or on the Deep, dwelt now at home;
Him only, of his country and his wife
Alike desirous, in her hollow grot
Calypso, beauteous Goddess, still detain'd
Wooing him to her arms; and when, at length, 20

Year rolling after year, the season came,
 That should restore him, by the will of Heav'n,
 To his lov'd Ithaca (nor even there,
 Friends only should he meet, but many a foe),
 Then all the Pow'rs above with pity view'd
 His num'rous toils, save Neptune; He alone,
 With ceaseless rage pursuing him, withheld
 Godlike Ulysses from his native shores.
 But Neptune, now, the Æthiopians sought
 (The Æthiopians, utmost of mankind, 30
 These Eastward situate, those toward the West),
 Call'd to a hecatomb of bulls and lambs.
 There sitting, pleas'd he banqueted; the Gods
 In Jove's abode, mean time, assembled all,
 'Midst whom the Sire of Heav'n and Earth began.
 For he recall'd to mind Ægisthus slain
 By Agamemnon's celebrated son
 Orestes, and retracing in his thought
 That dread event, the Immortals thus address'd:
 How rash are humankind! who charge on Us 40
 Their suff'rings, far more truly the result
 Of their own folly, than of our decrees.
 So now Ægisthus, under no constraint
 Of Destiny, had ta'en Atrides' wife
 To his own bed, and him at his return
 Hath foully slain, though not unwarn'd by Us,
 That he would surely perish; for we sent
 The watchful Argicide, who bade him fear
 Alike, to slay the king, or woo the queen;
 For that Atrides' son Orestes, soon 50
 As grown mature, and eager to assume
 The sway in Argos, should avenge the deed.
 So Hermes spake, but his advice mov'd not
 Ægisthus, on whose head the whole arrear
 Of vengeance heap'd at last hath therefore fall'n.
 To whom Minerva, Goddess azure-ey'd:
 O Jove, Saturnian Sire, o'er all supreme!
 And well he merited the death he found;
 So perish all, who shall, like him, offend.
 But with a bosom anguish-rent I view 60
 Ulysses, hapless chief! who, from his friends
 Remote, affliction hath long time endur'd

In yonder woodland isle, the central boss
 Of Ocean. That retreat a Goddess holds,
 Daughter of sapient Atlas, who the abyss
 Knows to its bottom, and the pillars high
 Himself upbears which sep'rate Earth from Heav'n.
 His daughter there the sorrowing chief detains,
 And ever with smooth speech, insidious, seeks
 To wean his heart from Ithaca; mean time 70
 Ulysses, happy might he but behold
 The smoke ascending from his native land,
 Death covets. Canst thou not, Olympian Jove!
 At last relent? Hath not Ulysses oft
 With victims slain amid Achaia's fleet
 Thee gratified, while yet at Troy he fought?
 How, therefore, hath he thus incens'd thee, Jove?
 To whom the Sov'reign of the realms of air:
 What words, my daughter, have escap'd thy lips?
 Can I forget Ulysses? Him forget 80
 So noble, who in wisdom all mankind
 Excels, and who hath sacrific'd so oft
 To us, whose dwelling is the boundless Heav'n?
 Earth-circling Neptune—He it is, whose wrath
 Pursues him ceaseless for the Cyclops' sake,
 Whom he hath blinded, Polypheme the vast,
 In strength superiour to his giant kind.
 For him the sea-nymph, Phorcys' daughter, bore
 Thoösa, by the Sov'reign of the waves
 Impregnated in caverns of the Deep. 90
 E'er since that day, the Shaker of the shores,
 Although he slay him not, yet devious drives
 Ulysses from his native isle afar.
 But come—devise we now with one consent
 His safe return, both means and prosp'rous end;
 So Neptune shall his wrath remit, whose pow'r,
 In contest with the force of all the Gods
 Exerted single, can but strive in vain.
 To whom Minerva, Goddess azure-ey'd:
 O Jupiter! above all kings enthron'd! 100
 If the immortals ever-blest ordain,
 That wise Ulysses to his home return,
 Dispatch we then Hermes the Argicide,
 Our messenger, to fair Ogygia's isle,

Who shall inform Calypso, nymph divine,
 Of this our purpose, that Ulysses, long
 A suff'rer, seek, at length, his home again.
 Myself will hence to Ithaca, mean-time,
 His son to animate, and with new force
 Inspire him, that (the Greecians all conven'd 110
 In council), he, at once, may bid depart
 The suitors from his home, who, day by day,
 His num'rous flocks and fatted herds consume.
 And I will send him thence to Sparta forth,
 And into sandy Pylus, there to hear
 (If hear he may) some tidings of his sire,
 And to procure himself a glorious name.

This said, her golden sandals to her feet
 She bound, ambrosial, which, o'er all the Earth,
 And o'er the moist flood waft her fleet as air; 120
 Then, seizing her brass-pointed spear robust,
 In length, and bulk, and weight a matchless beam,
 With which the Jove-born Goddess levels ranks
 Of heroes, against whom her anger burns,
 From the Olympian summit down she flew
 To Ithac, where, in the vestibule
 And on the threshold of Ulysses' hall,
 Grasping her brazen spear she stood, in form
 The hero Mentès, hospitable chief
 Of Taphos' isle—she found the haughty throng, 130
 The suitors; they before the palace gate
 Sported with iv'ry cubes, reclin'd on hides
 Of num'rous oxen, which themselves had slain.
 The heralds and the busy menials there
 Minister'd to them; these their mantling cups
 With water slak'd; with bib'lous sponges those
 Made clean the tables, set the banquet on,
 And portion'd out to each his plenteous share.
 Long ere the rest Telemachus himself
 Mark'd her, for sad amid them all he sat, 140
 Portraying in deep thought contemplative
 His noble sire, and questioning if yet
 Perchance the hero might return, to chase
 From all his palace that imperious herd,
 To his own honour lord of his own home.
 Thus musing there, he suddenly perceiv'd



The Goddess, and sprang forth, for he abhorr'd
To see a guest's admittance long delay'd ;
Approaching eager, her right hand he seiz'd,
The brazen spear took from her, and in words 150
With welcome wing'd Minerva thus address'd :

Stranger ! Thou shalt be welcome ; ent'ring, share
The banquet, first, then tell me thy desire.

So saying, toward the spacious hall he mov'd
Follow'd by Pallas, and, arriving soon
Beneath the lofty roof, plac'd her bright spear
Within a pillar's cavity, long time
The armoury where many a spear had stood,
Bright weapons of his own illustrious sire.

Then, leading her toward a footstool'd throne 160
Magnificent, which first he overspread
With linen, there he seated her apart
From that rude throng, and for himself dispos'd
A throne of various colours at her side ;
Lest, stunn'd with clamour of the lawless band,
His guest should suffer pain, and that himself
Might ask him tidings of his absent sire.

And now a maiden charg'd with golden ew'r,
And with an argent laver, pouring first
Pure water on their hands, supplied them next 170
With a resplendent table, which the chaste
Directress of the household heap'd with bread
And dainties, remnants of the last regale.

Then, in his turn, the sewer with sav'ry meats
Serv'd them, of delicate and various kinds,
And golden cups beside the chargers plac'd,
Which the attendant herald fill'd with wine.

Erelong, in rush'd the suitors, and the thrones
And couches occupied, on all whose hands
The heralds pour'd pure water ; then the maids 180
Attended them with bread in baskets heap'd,
And eager they assail'd the ready feast,

At length, when neither thirst nor hunger more
They felt unsatisfied, to new delights
Their thoughts they turn'd, to song and sprightly
dance,

Enliv'ning sequel of the banquet's joys.

A herald then to Phemius' hand consign'd

His beauteous lyre; he through constraint regal'd
 The suitors with his song, and while the chords
 He struck in prelude to his pleasant strains, 190
 Telemachus, in accents whisper'd close
 To Pallas' ear, the Goddess thus address'd:

My inmate and my friend! far from my lips
 Be ev'ry word that might displease thine ear!
 Song and the sprightly lyre may well engage
 These wanton feeders at another's cost,
 Whose bones lie weather-bleach'd we know not where,
 On foreign ground, or rolling in the Deep.
 Ah! could they see him once to his own isle
 Restor'd, both gold and raiment they would wish 200
 Far less and nimbleness of foot instead.
 But he, alas! hath by a wretched fate
 Past question perish'd, and what news soe'er
 We hear of his return, no comfort breeds
 In us, convinc'd that he returns no more.
 But answer undissembling; tell me true;
 Who art thou? whence? where stands thy city? where
 Thy father's mansion? In what kind of ship
 Cam'st thou? Why steer'd the mariners their course
 To Ithaca, and of what land are they? 210
 For that on foot thou found'st us not, is sure.
 This also tell me, hast thou now arriv'd
 New to our isle, or wast thou heretofore
 My father's guest? Since many to our house
 Resorted in those happier days, for he
 Drew irresistibly the hearts of all.

Then thus the Goddess of the azure eyes:
 I will with all simplicity of truth
 Thy questions satisfy. Behold in me
 Mentès, the offspring of a chief renown'd 220
 In war, Anchialus; and I rule, myself,
 The Taphians, mariners expert and bold.
 This day we here arriv'd, myself and crew,
 Seeking a people of another tongue
 Athwart the gloomy flood, in quest of brass,
 For which I barter steel, ploughing the waves
 To Temesa. My ship beneath the woods
 Neüs, at yonder field that skirts
 Your city, in the haven Rhethrus rides.

We are hereditary guests; our sires 230
 Were friends long since; as, when thou seest him
 next,
 The hero old Laertes will avouch,
 Of whom, I learn, that he frequents no more
 The city now, but in sequester'd scenes
 Dwells sorrowful, and by an ancient dame,
 Oft as strength fails him, while he creeps and toils
 Among his vines, with food and drink supplied.
 But I have come drawn hither by report,
 Which spake thy sire arriv'd, though still it seems
 The adverse Gods his homeward course retard. 240
 For not yet breathless lies the noble chief,
 But in some island of the boundless flood
 Resides a prisoner, by barb'rous force
 Of some rude race detain'd reluctant there.
 And I will now foreshow thee what the Gods
 Teach me, and what, though neither auger skill'd
 Nor prophet, I yet trust shall come to pass.
 He shall not, henceforth, live an exile long
 From his own shores; no, not although in bands
 Of iron held, but will ere long contrive 250
 His own return; for in expedients, fram'd
 With wondrous ingenuity, he abounds.
 But tell me true; art thou, in stature such,
 Son of himself Ulysses? for thy face
 And sparkling eyes seem plainly to bespeak
 Ulysses in thee; for delights like these,
 With him conversing, I have oft enjoy'd,
 Ere yet, with many a gallant Grecian more,
 He sail'd to Troy. But never have I, since,
 Ulysses seen, nor hath Ulysses, me. 260.

To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied:
 Stranger! The truth is this. My mother him
 Affirms my father, and the mother's voice
 That question can alone with truth decide.
 Would I were offspring of some happier sire,
 Ordain'd in calm possession of his own
 To reach the verge of life. But now, alas!
 I am the rumour'd offspring of a man
 Of all mankind unhappiest. Thy demand
 Was simple truth; thus therefore I reply. 270

Then answer blue-ey'd Pallas thus return'd:
 From no ignoble race, in future days,
 The Gods shall prove thee sprung, whom so endow'd
 With ev'ry grace Penelope hath borne.
 But tell me true. What festival is this?
 This throng—whence are they? wherefore hast thou
 need

Of such a multitude? Behold I here
 A banquet, or a nuptial feast? for these
 Meet not by contribution to regale,
 With such brutality and din they hold 280
 Their riotous banquet! a wise man and good,
 Arriving now among them, at the sight
 Of such enormities would much be wroth.

To whom replied Telemachus discreet:
 Since, stranger! thou hast ask'd, learn also this.
 While yet Ulysses with his people dwelt,
 His presence warranted the hope, that here
 Virtue should dwell and opulence; but Heav'n
 Hath cast for us, at length, a diff'rent lot,
 And he is lost, as never man before. 290
 For I should less lament his death itself,
 Had he among his friends at Ilium fall'n,
 Or in the arms of his companions died,
 Troy's siege accomplish'd. Then his tomb the Greeks
 Of ev'ry tribe had built, and he had won
 A never-dying name for me; but now,
 By harpies torn inglorious, beyond reach
 Of eye or ear he lies; and hath to me
 Grief only, and unceasing sighs, bequeath'd.
 Nor mourn I for his sake alone; the Gods 300
 Have plann'd for me still many a wo beside;
 For all the rulers of the neighbour isles,
 Samos, Dulichium, and the forest-crown'd
 Zacynthus, others also, rulers here
 In craggy Ithaca, my mother seek
 In marriage, and my household stores consume.
 But she nor *will* accept, nor *can* dismiss
 Their hated suit, and they, mean time, devour
 My substance, who, myself, must perish soon.

To whom, with deep commiseration pang'd, 310
 Pallas replied: Alas! great need hast thou

Of thy long absent father, to avenge
These num'rous wrongs; for could he now appear
There, at yon portal, arm'd with helmet, shield,
And grasping his two spears, such as when first
I saw him drinking joyous at our board,
From Ilus son of Mermeris, who dwelt
In distant Ephyre, just then return'd
(For thither also had Ulysses gone
In his swift bark, seeking some pois'nous drug, 320
Wherewith to taint his brazen arrows keen,
Which drug through fear of the eternal Gods
Ilus refus'd, but readily my sire
Gave to him, for he lov'd him past belief),
Could now, Ulysses, clad in arms as then,
Mix with these suitors, short his date of life
To each, and bitter should his nuptials prove.
But whether, safe restor'd, he shall avenge,
In his own house, his wrongs, or whether not,
Rests, for decision, with the Gods alone. 330
Mean time I counsel thee, thyself to think
By what means likeliest thou shalt expel
These from thy doors. Now mark me: close attend,
To-morrow, summoning the Greccian chiefs
To council, speak to them, and call the Gods
To witness that solemnity. Bid go
The suitors hence, each to his own abode;
And if thy mother's choice be strongly bent
To marriage, let her to the house return
Of her own potent father, who, himself, 340
Shall furnish forth her matrimonial rites,
And ample dow'r, such as it well becomes
A darling daughter to receive, bestow.
But hear me now; thyself I thus advise.
The prime of all thy ships preparing, mann'd
With twenty rowers, voyage hence to seek
Intelligence of thy long absent sire.
Some mortal may inform thee, or a word,
Perchance, by Jove directed (safest source
Of notice to mankind), may reach thine ear. 350
First voyaging to Pylus, there inquire
Of noble Nestor; thence to Sparta tend,
To question Menelaus, last arriv'd

Of all the Greeceans; and, if there thou learn
 That still thy father lives, and hope obtain
 Of his return, then, suffer as thou mayst,
 With patience wait his coming yet a year.
 But shouldst thou learn his death, then seek again
 Thy native shores, and, having heap'd his tomb,
 And with due pomp his fun'ral rites perform'd, 360
 Make thou thy mother's spousals next thy care.
 These duties satisfied, delib'rate last,
 Whether thou shalt these troublers of thy house
 By stratagem, or by assault, destroy,
 For thou art now no child, nor mayst pursue
 The sports of children longer. Has the deed
 Of brave Orestes never reach'd thine ear,
 Whom all mankind extol? For he hath slain
 Ægisthus, sly contriver of the death
 Of Agamemnon, his illustrious sire. 370
 And thou, my youthful friend, whose form robust
 And fair proportions with delight I view,
 Be thou brave also, that renown like his
 Thou mayst acquire with ages yet to come.
 But I will to my vessel now repair,
 And to my mariners, whom, absent long,
 I may perchance have troubled. Weigh thou well
 My counsel; let not my advice be lost.

To whom Telemachus discreet replied
 Stranger! thy words bespeak thee much my friend,
 Who, as a father teaches his own son, 381
 Has taught me what I never will forget.
 But, though in haste thy voyage to pursue,
 Yet stay, that in the bath refreshing first
 Thy limbs now weary thou mayst sprightlier seek
 Thy gallant bark, charg'd with some noble gift
 Of finish'd workmanship, which thou shalt keep
 As my memorial ever; such a boon
 As men confer on guests whom much they love.

Then thus Minerva, Goddess azure-ey'd: 390
 Retard me not, for go I must; the gift,
 Which lib'ral thou desirest to bestow,
 Give me at my return, that I may bear
 The treasure home; and, in exchange, thyself
 Expect some gift equivalent from me.

She spake, and as with eagle wings upborne,
Vanish'd incontinent, but him inspir'd
With daring fortitude, and on his heart
Dearer remembrance of his sire impress'd
Than ever. Conscious of the mighty change, 400
Amaz'd he stood, and, in his secret thought
Revolving all, believ'd his guest a God.
The youthful hero to the suitors then
Repair'd; they silent listen'd to the song
Of the illustrious bard; he the return
Deplorable of the Achaian host
From Ilium, by command of Pallas, sang.
Penelope, Icarius' daughter, mark'd
Mean time the song celestial, where she sat
In the superiour palace; down she came, 410
By all the num'rous steps of her abode;
Not sole, for two fair handmaids follow'd her.
She then, divinest of her sex, arriv'd
In presence of that lawless throng, beneath
The portal of her stately mansion stood,
Between her maidens, with her lucid veil
Her lovely features mantling. There, profuse
She wept, and thus the sacred bard bespake:
Phemius! for many a sorrow-soothing strain
Thou know'st beside, such as exploits record 420
Of Gods and men, the poet's frequent theme;
Give them of those a song, and let themselves
Their wine drink noiseless; but this mournful strain
Break off, unfriendly to my bosom's peace,
And which of all hearts nearest touches mine,
With such regret my dearest lord I mourn,
Rememb'ring still a husband prais'd from side
To side, and in the very heart of Greece.
Then answer thus Telemachus return'd:
My mother! leave the tuneful bard unblam'd 430
To his own choice. No bard, himself, creates
The woes of which he sings, but Jove supplies
Each, at his pleasure, with a mournful theme;
And he records Achaia's hapless doom
Thus sweetly with good cause; for newest strains
Most take the list'ning ear. Of all who fought

At Troy, Ulysses hath not lost, alone,
 His day of glad return; but many a chief
 Hath perish'd also. Seek thou then again
 Thy own apartment, spindle ply and loom, 440
 And task thy maidens; management belongs
 To men of joys convivial, and of men
 Especially to me, chief ruler here.

She heard astonish'd; and the prudent speech
 Reposing of her son deep in her heart,
 Again with her attendant maidens sought
 Her upper chamber. There arriv'd, she wept
 Her lost Ulysses, till Minerva bath'd
 Her weary lids in dewy sleep profound.
 Then echo'd through the gloomy vaults of all 450
 The lofty roof the suitors' boist'rous roar;
 For each was hot to share the royal bed.

Whom thus Telemachus discreet address'd:
 All ye, my mother's suitors, though addict
 To contumacious wrangling fierce, suspend
 Your clamour; for a course to me it seems
 More decent far, when such a bard as this,
 Godlike for sweetness, sings, to hear his song.
 To-morrow meet we in full council all,
 That I may plainly warn you to depart 460
 From this our mansion. Seek ye where ye may
 Your feasts; consume your own, alternate fed
 Each at the other's cost; but if it seem
 Wisest in your account and best, to eat
 Voracious thus the patrimonial goods
 Of one man, rend'ring no account of all,
 Bite to the roots; but know that I will cry
 Ceaseless to the eternal Gods, in hope,
 That Jove, for retribution of the wrong,
 Shall doom you, where ye have intruded; there 470
 To bleed, and of your blood ask no account.

He ended, and each gnaw'd his lip, aghast
 At his undaunted hardiness of speech.

Then thus Antinoüs spake, Eupithes' son:
 Telemachus! the Gods, methinks, themselves
 Teach thee sublimity, and to pronounce
 Thy matter fearless. Ah, forbid it, Jove!

That one so eloquent should with the weight
Of kingly cares in Ithaca be charg'd,
A realm, by claim hereditary, thine. 480

Then prudent thus Telemachus replied:
Although my speech, Antinoüs, may, perchance,
Provoke thee, know that I am not averse
From kingly cares, if Jove appoint me such.
Seems it to thee a burden to be fear'd
By men above all others? trust me, no.
There is no ill in royalty; the man
So station'd waits not long ere he obtain
Riches and honour. But I grant that kings
Of the Achaians may no few be found 490
In sea-girt Ithaca both young and old,
Of whom, since great Ulysses is no more,
Reign whoso may; but king, myself, I am
In my own house, and over all my own
Domestics, by Ulysses gain'd for me.

To whom Eurymachus replied, the son
Of Polybus. What Grecian chief shall reign
In sea-girt Ithaca, must be referr'd
To the Gods' will, Telemachus! mean time
Ulysses' rich possessions and his house 500
Are doubtless thine, and thou art sov'reign here.
May never that man on her shores arrive,
While an inhabitant shall yet be left
In Ithaca, who shall by violence wrest
Thine from thee. But permit me, noble Sir!
To ask thee of thy guest. Whence came the man?
What country claims him? Where are to be found
His kindred and his patrimonial fields?
Brings he glad tidings of thy sire's approach
Homeward? or came he to receive a debt 510
Due to himself? how swift he disappear'd!
Nor opportunity to know him gave
To those who wish'd it; for his face and air
Him speak not of plebeian birth obscure.

Whom answer'd thus Telemachus discreet:
Eurymachus! my father comes no more.
I can no longer credit tidings now,
If such arrive; nor heed I more the song
Of soothsay'rs whom my mother may consult.

But this my guest hath known in other days 520
My father ; sea-girt Taphos is his home,
Mentes his name, Anchialus his sire ;
And his control the Taphian race, renown'd
For naval skill, unanimous obey.

So spake Telemachus, but in his heart
Knew well his guest a Goddess from the skies.
Then they to dance and heart-enliv'ning song
Turn'd joyous, waiting the approach of eve ;
The dusky evening found them joyous still,
When each, to his own house retiring, sought 530
Needful repose. Telemachus, the while,
In various musings occupied, to rest
Also retir'd, in his own chamber, built
On the hall-roof, conspicuous from afar.
Sage Euryclea, bearing in each hand
A torch, preceded him ; her sire was Ops,
Pisenor's son, and, in her early prime,
At his own cost Laertes made her his,
Paying with twenty beeves her purchase-price.
Nor in less honour than his spotless wife 540
He held her ever ; but, his consort's wrath
Fearing, at no time call'd her to his bed.
She bore the torches, and with truer heart
Lov'd him than any of the female train ;
For she had nurs'd him in his infant years.
He open'd his broad chamber-valves, and sat
On his couch-side ; then, putting off his vest
Of softest texture, placed it in the hands
Of the attendant dame discreet, who first
Folding it with exactest care, beside 550
His bed suspended it, and going forth,
Drew by its silver ring the portal close,
And fastened it with bolt and brace secure.
There lay Telemachus, on finest wool
Repos'd, contemplating all night his course
Prescrib'd by Pallas to the Pylian shore.

BOOK II.

Argument.

Telemachus, having convened an assembly of the Grecians, publicly calls on the suitors to relinquish the house of Ulysses. During the continuance of the council he has much to suffer from the petulance of the suitors, from whom, having informed them of his design to undertake a voyage in hope to obtain news of Ulysses, he asks a ship, with all things necessary for the purpose. He is refused; but is afterwards furnished with what he wants by Minerva, in the form of Mentor. He embarks in the evening without the privity of his mother, and the Goddess sails with him.

AURORA, rosy daughter of the dawn,
Now ting'd the East, when, habited again,
Uprose Ulysses' offspring from his bed.
Athwart his back his falchion keen he slung,
His sandals bound to his unsullied feet,
And, godlike, issu'd from his chamber-door.
At once the clear-voic'd heràlds he enjoin'd,
To call the Greeks to council: they aloud
Gave forth the summons, and the throng began.
When all were gather'd, and th' assembly full, 10
He grasp'd his lance, and, setting forth, repair'd
Himself, to council; nor alone he went,
But follow'd by his hounds, a faithful pair.
O'er all his form Minerva largely shed
Majestic grace divine, and, as he mov'd,
The gazing crowd his princely port admir'd.
The seniors gave him place, and down he sat
On his paternal throne. Then grave arose
The hero, old Ægyptius; bow'd with age
Was he, and by experience deep-inform'd. 20
His son had with Ulysses, godlike chief,
On board his fleet to distant Ilium gone,

The warrior Antiphus, whom in his cave
The savage Cyclops slew, and on his flesh
At ev'ning made obscene his last regale.

Three sons he had beside, a suitor one,
Eurynomus; whose brothers, day by day,
Both serv'd their ancient father in his fields.

Yet he forgot not, father as he was
Of these, his absent eldest, whom he mourn'd 30
Ceaseless, and thus his speech, with tears, began:

Hear me, ye men of Ithaca, my friends!
Nor council here nor session hath been held,
Since great Ulysses left his native shore.

Who now convenes us? what especial need
Hath urg'd him, whether of our youth he be,
Or of our senators by age matur'd?

Have tidings reach'd him of our host's return,
Which here he would divulge? or brings he aught
Of public import on a diff'rent theme? 40

I deem him, whosoe'r he be, a man
Worthy to prosper, and may Jove vouchsafe
A blessing on the purpose of his heart!

He ended, and Telemachus rejoic'd
In that good omen. Ardent to begin,
He sat not long, but moving to the midst,
Receiv'd the sceptre from Pisenor's hand,
His prudent herald, and addressing, next,
The hoary chief Ægyptius, thus replied:

Not far remote, as thou shalt soon thyself 50
Perceive, O venerable chief! he stands,
Who hath conven'd this council. I am he.

I am in chief the suff'rer. Tidings none
Of the returning host I have receiv'd,
Which here I would divulge; nor bring I aught

Of public import on a different theme,
But my own trouble, on my own house fall'n,
And twofold fall'n. One is, that I have lost

A noble father, who, as fathers rule
Benign their children, govern'd once yourselves; 60
The other, and the more alarming ill,

With ruin threatens my whole house, and all
My patrimony with immediate waste.
Suitors (their children who in this our isle

Hold highest rank), importunate besiege
 My mother, though desirous not to wed,
 Dare not solicit, in that cause, her sire
 Icarius, who might give his daughter dow'r,
 And portion her to whom he most approves
 (A course which, only nam'd, moves their disgust), 70
 But rather choose, intruding here, to slay
 My sheep, and beeves, and fatted goats, and drink
 My sable wine—waste hard to be sustain'd.
 For I have no Ulysses to relieve
 Me and my family from this abuse.
 Ourselves are not sufficient; we, alas!
 Too feeble should be found, and yet to learn
 How best to use the little force we own;
 Else, had I pow'r, I would, myself, redress
 The evil; for it now surpasses far 80
 All suff'rance, now they ravage uncontroll'd,
 Nor show of decency vouchsafe me more.
 Resent, yourselves, this outrage; dread the blame,
 Which else ye must incur from ev'ry state
 Around us, and the anger of the Gods,
 Lest they impute these impious deeds to you.
 I next adjure you by Olympian Jove,
 By Themis, who convenes and who dissolves
 All councils, that ye interpose, my friends!
 To check them, and afford to my distress 90
 A solitary and a silent home.
 But if Ulysses, my illustrious sire,
 Hath injur'd any noble Grecian here,
 Whose wrongs ye purpose to avenge on me,
 Then aid them openly; for better far
 Were my condition, if yourselves consum'd
 My revenue; ye should compensate soon
 My suff'rings at *your* hands; for my complaints
 Should rouse all Ithaca to my redress,
 Nor cease, till I were satisfied for all; 100
 But now, conniving at the wrong, ye pierce
 My soul with anguish not to be endur'd.

He spake impassion'd, and to earth cast down
 His sceptre weeping. Pity at that sight
 Seiz'd all the people; mute the assembly sat
 Long time, none dar'd with answer rough to greet

Telemachus, till of them all, at last,
Antinoüs, sole arising, thus replied :

Telemachus, intemp'rate in harangue,
High-sounding orator ! it is thy drift, 110

To make us odious all; but the offence
Lies not with us the suitors; she alone,

Thy mother, who in subtlety excels,
And deep-wrought subterfuge, deserves the blame.

Three years entire, and, now, well-nigh a fourth,
She hath beguil'd with her delusive arts

The Grecians; message after message sent
Brings hope to each, by turns, and promise fair;

But she, mean time, far otherwise intends.
Her other arts exhausted all, she fram'd 120

This stratagem; a web of amplest size
And subtlest woof beginning, thus she spake :

Princes, my suitors ! since the noble chief
Ulysses is no more, press not as yet

My nuptials, wait till I shall finish, first,
A fun'ral robe (lest all my threads decay)

Which for the ancient hero I prepare,
Laertes, looking for the mournful hour,

When fate shall snatch 'him to eternal rest;
Else I the censure dread of all my sex, 130

Should he, so wealthy, want at last a shroud.
So spake the queen, and unsuspecting we

With her request complied. Thenceforth all day
She wove the ample web, and by the aid

Of torches ravell'd it again at night.
Three years by such contrivance she deceiv'd

The Grecians; but when (three whole years elaps'd)
The fourth arriv'd, then, conscious of the fraud,

A damsel of her train told all the truth,
And we surpris'd her marring all her work. 140

Thus, through necessity she hath, at length,
Perform'd the task, and in her own despite.

Therefore, to satisfy not thee alone,
But all men here assembled, we reply :

Dismiss thy mother with a charge to wed
Whom most Icarius and herself approve.

But should she still torment us with delay,
Studious alone to merit praise for arts

By Pallas giv'n her largely; matchless skill
 To weave the splendid web; sagacious thought; 150
 And shrewdness, such as never fame ascrib'd
 To any beauteous Greek of ancient days,
 Tyro, Mycene, or Alcmena lov'd
 By Jove himself, all whom th' accomplish'd queen
 Transcends in knowledge, ignorant alone
 That, woo'd long time, she should at last be won.
 Then know, that while the Gods with adverse sway
 Thus warp her judgement, ev'ry suitor still
 Shall banquet at thy cost. A glorious name
 She to herself ensures, but equal wo 160
 And devastation of thy wealth to thee;
 For neither to our proper works at home
 Go we, of that be sure, nor yet elsewhere,
 Till him she wed, to whom she most inclines.

Then prudent thus Telemachus replied:
 Antinoüs! to thrust the mother forth,
 Who gave me birth and fear'd me, were a deed
 Unnat'ral and impossible to me.
 Alive or dead, my sire is far remote,
 And should I, voluntary, hence dismiss 170
 My mother to Icarius, I must much
 Refund, which hardship were and loss to me.
 So doing, I should also wrath incur
 From my offended sire, and from the Gods
 Still more; for she, departing, would invoke
 Erynnis to avenge her, and reproach
 Beside would follow me from all mankind.
 That word I, therefore, never will pronounce.
 No, if ye judge your treatment at her hands
 Injurious to you, go ye forth yourselves, 180
 Forsake my mansion; seek where else ye may
 Your feasts; consume your own; alternate feed
 Each at the other's cost. But if it seem
 Wisest in your account and best to eat
 Voraciously the patrimonial goods
 Of one man, rend'ring no account of all,
 Bite to the roots; but know that I will cry
 Ceaseless to the eternal Gods, in hope
 That Jove, in retribution of the wrong,

Shall doom you, where ye have intruded, there 190
To bleed, and of your blood ask no account.

So spake Telemachus, and while he spake,
The Thund'rer from a lofty mountain-top
Turn'd off two eagles; on the winds, awhile,
With outspread pinions ample side by side
They floated; but, erelong, hov'ring aloft,
Right o'er the midst of the assembled chiefs
They wheel'd around, clang'd all their num'rous
plumes,

And eyeing with a downward look the throng,
Death boded, ominous; then rending each 200
The other's face and neck, they sprang at once
Toward the right, and darted through the town.
Amazement universal, at that sight,
Seiz'd the assembly, and with anxious thought
Each scann'd the future; amidst whom arose
The hero Helitherses, ancient seer,
Offspring of Mastor; for in judgement he
Of portents augural, and in forecast
Unerring, his coevals all excell'd,
And prudent thus the multitude bespake: 210

Hear, all ye men of Ithaca! but hear
Ye suitors chiefly, for I speak of woes
Tremendous, by the Gods prepar'd for you.
Ulysses shall not from his friends henceforth
Live absent long, but, hasting to his home,
Comes even now, and as he comes, designs
A bloody death for these, whose bitter woes
No few shall share, inhabitants with us
Of pleasant Ithaca; but let us frame
Effectual means, maturely to suppress 220
Their violent deeds, or rather let themselves
Repentant cease; and soonest shall be best.
Not inexpert, but well-inform'd I speak
The future, and the accomplishment announce
Of all which, when Ulysses with the Greeks
Embark'd for Troy, I to himself foretold.
I said, that, after many woes, and loss
Of all his people, in the twentieth year,
Unknown to all, he should regain his home,

And my prediction shall be now fulfill'd. 230

Him then Eurymachus thus answer'd rough,
The son of Polybus : Hence, dotard ! Hence
To thy own house ; there prophesying, warn
Thy children of calamities to come.

Birds num'rous flutter in the beams of day,
Not all predictive. Death far hence remote
Hath found Ulysses, and I would to Heav'n,
That, where he died, thyself had perish'd too.

Then hadst thou not with these prophetic strains
O'erwhelm'd us, nor Telemachus impell'd, 240

Already thus incens'd, in hope to win,
Perchance, for thine some favour at his hands.

But I to *thee* foretell, skill'd as thou art
In legends old (nor shall my threat be vain),

That if by artifice thou move to wrath
A younger than thyself, no matter whom,

Thou shalt but plunge him deeper, in his cause
Much enterprising, and performing nought,

And we will charge thyself with such a fine
As thou shalt pay with difficulty, and bear 250

The burden of it with an aching heart.
As for Telemachus, I him advise,

Myself, and press the measure on his choice
Earnestly, that he send his mother hence

To her own father's house, who shall, himself,
Set forth her nuptial rites, and shall endow

His daughter sumptuously, and as he ought.
For this expensive wooing, as I judge,

Till then shall never cease ; since we regard
No man—no—not Telemachus, although 260

In words exub'rant ; neither fear we aught
Thy vain prognostics, venerable sir !

But only hate thee for their sake the more.
Waste will continue and disorder foul

Unremedied, so long as she shall hold
The suitors in suspense, for, day by day,

Our emulation goads us to the strife ;
Nor shall we seek, departing hence, t' espouse

Each his own consort suitable elsewhere.

To whom, discreet, Telemachus replied : 270
Eurymachus, and ye the suitor train

Illustrious, I have spoken; ye shall hear
 No more this supplication urg'd by me.
 The Gods, and all the Greeks, now know the truth.
 But give me instantly a gallant bark
 With twenty rowers, skill'd their course to win
 To whatsoever haven: for I go
 To sandy Pylus, and shall hasten thence
 To Lacedemon, tidings to obtain
 Of my long absent sire, or from the lips 280
 Of man, or by a word from Jove vouchsaf'd
 Himself, best source of notice to mankind.
 If, there inform'd that still my father lives,
 I hope conceive of his return, although
 Distress'd, I shall be patient yet a year.
 But should I haply learn that he survives
 No longer, then, returning, I will raise
 At home his tomb, will with such pomp perform
 His fun'ral rites, as his great name demands,
 And give my mother's hand to whom I may. 290

This said he sat, and after him arose
 Mentor, illustrious Ulysses' friend,
 To whom, embarking thence, he had consign'd
 All his concerns, that under his discreet
 And just control, his household might enjoy
 Peace and security till his return.
 Arising, thus the senior sage began:

Hear me, ye Ithacans! be never king,
 From this time forth, benevolent, humane,
 Or righteous; but let every scepter'd hand 300
 Rule merciless, and deal in wrong alone;
 Since none of all his people, whom he sway'd
 With such paternal gentleness and love,
 Remembers the divine Ulysses more!
 That the imperious suitors thus should weave
 The web of mischief and atrocious wrong,
 I grudge not; since at hazard of their heads
 They make Ulysses' property a prey,
 Persuaded that the hero comes no more.
 But much the people move me: how ye sit 310
 All mute, and, though a crowd oppos'd to few,
 Check not the suitors with a single word!

Then thus Liocritus, Evenor's son:

Injurious Mentor! headlong orator!
 How dar'st thou move the populace against
 The suitors? Trust me they should find it hard,
 Numerous as they are, to cope with us,
 A feast the prize. Or should the king himself
 Of Ithaca, returning, undertake
 T' expel the jovial suitors from his house, 320
 Much as Penelope his absence mourns,
 His presence should afford her little joy;
 For fighting sole with many, he should meet
 A dreadful death. Thou, therefore, speak'st amiss.
 Mentor and Halytherses, from their youth
 His father's chosen friends, shall furnish forth
 Telemachus; but likelier far it seems,
 That news should reach him here, than that himself
 In search of news should reach the Pylian shore.

Thus saying, Liocritus dissolved in haste 330
 The council, and the scatter'd concourse sought
 Their sev'ral homes, while all the suitors flock'd
 Thence to the palace of their absent king.
 Mean time Telemachus from all resort
 Retiring, in the surf of the gray Deep
 First lav'd his hands, then, thus to Pallas pray'd:

O Goddess! who wast yesterday a guest
 Beneath my roof, and didst enjoin me then
 A voyage o'er the sable Deep in quest
 Of tidings of my long-regretted sire! 340
 Behold! the Greeks, but, most of all, the proud
 Injurious suitors thwart the whole design.

Such pray'r he made; then Pallas, in the form
 And with the voice of Mentor, drawing nigh,
 In accents wing'd, him kindly thus bespake:

Telemachus, thou shalt hereafter prove
 Nor base, nor poor in talents. If, in truth,
 Thou have receiv'd from Heav'n thy father's force
 Instill'd into thee, and resemblest him
 In promptness both of action and of speech, 350
 Thy voyage shall not useless be, or vain.
 But if Penelope produc'd thee not
 His son, I hope not then a good effect
 Of this design, which ardent thou pursu'st.
 Few sons their fathers equal: most appear

Degen'rate; but we find, though rare, sometimes
 A son superiour even to his sire.
 And since thyself shalt neither base be found
 Nor spiritless, nor altogether void
 Of talents, such as in Ulysses shone, 360
 I therefore hope success of thy attempt.
 Heed not the suitors' projects; neither wise
 Are they, nor just, nor aught suspect the doom
 Which now approaches them, and in one day
 Shall overwhelm them all. No long suspense
 Shall hold thy purpos'd enterprise in doubt;
 Such help from me, of old thy father's friend,
 Thou shalt receive, who with a bark well oar'd
 Will serve thee, and myself attend thee forth.
 But haste, join thou the suitors, and provide, 370
 In sep'rate vessels stow'd, all needful stores,
 Wine in thy jars, and flour, the strength of man,
 In skins close-seam'd. I will, mean time, select
 Such as shall voluntary share thy toils.
 In sea-girt Ithaca new ships and old
 Abound, and I will choose, myself, for thee
 The prime of all, which without more delay
 We will launch out into the spacious Deep.

So Pallas, progeny of Jove; nor long,
 Thus greeted by the voice divine, delay'd 380
 Telemachus, but to his palace went
 Distress'd in heart. He found the suitors there
 Goats flaying in the hall, and fatted swine
 Roasted; when with a laugh Antinoüs flew
 To meet him, fasten'd on his hand, and said:

Telemachus, in eloquence sublime,
 And of a spirit not to be controll'd!
 Give harbour in thy breast on no account
 To after-grudge or enmity, but eat
 Rather with cheerfulness as thou art wont, 390
 And freely drink, committing all thy cares
 To the Achaïans, who shall furnish forth
 A gallant ship and chosen crew for thee,
 That thou mayst hence to Pylus with all speed
 Tidings to learn of thy illustrious sire.

To whom Telemachus discreet replied:
 Antinoüs! I have no heart to feast

With guests so insolent, nor can indulge
 The pleasures of a mind at ease, with you.
 May it not well suffice you to have us'd 400
 My noble patrimony as your own,
 While I was yet a child? now, grown mature,
 And competent to understand the speech
 Of my instructors, feeling, too, a mind
 Within me conscious of augmented pow'rs,
 I will attempt your ruin, be assur'd,
 Whether at Pylus, or continuing here.
 I go, indeed (nor shall my voyage prove
 Of which I speak, a fruitless one), I go
 An humble passenger, who neither bark 410
 Nor rowers have to boast my own, denied
 That honour (so ye judg'd it best) by you.

He said, and from Antinoüs' hand his own
 Drew softly. Then their delicate repast
 The busy suitors on all sides prepar'd,
 Still taunting as they toil'd, and with sharp speech
 Sarcastic wantoning, of whom a youth
 Arrogant as his fellows, thus began:

Our doom is fix'd, and we must all be slain.
 Either Telemachus will aids procure 420
 From sandy Pylus, or will bring them arm'd
 From Sparta; such is his tremendous drift.
 Even to fruitful Ephyre, perchance,
 He will proceed, seeking some baneful herb,
 Which, cast into our cup, shall drug us all,

Another, in his turn, thus scoff'd aloud:
 Who knows but that himself, while far remote
 From all his friends he roams the dreary Deep,
 May perish like Ulysses? Whence to us
 Should double toil ensue, on whom the charge 450
 To parcel out his wealth would then devolve,
 And to endow his mother with the house
 For his abode, whom she should chance to wed.

So sported they; but he, ascending, sought
 His father's chamber, where his brass, and gold,
 And raiment in capacious chests he kept,
 And oils of fragrant scent, a copious store.
 There many a cask with season'd nectar fill'd,
 The grape's pure juice divine, beside the wall

Stood waiting, orderly arrang'd, the hour 440
 (Should e'er such hour arrive), when, after woes,
 Num'rous, Ulysses should regain his home.
 Secure that chamber was with folding doors
 Of massy planks compact, and, night and day,
 Within it ancient Euryclea dwelt,
 Guardian discreet of all the treasures there,
 Whom, thither call'd, Telemachus address'd:

Nurse! draw me forth sweet wine into my jars,
 Delicious next to that which thou reserv'st
 For our poor wand'rer; if, escaping death 450
 At last, divine Ulysses e'er return.

Fill twelve, and stop them close; pour also meal
 Well-mill'd (full twenty measures) into skins
 Close-seam'd, and mention what thou dost to none.
 Place them together; for at even-tide,
 Soon as the queen, retiring to her couch,
 Shall seek repose, I will bestow them all
 On board a bark; for to the Pylian shore
 And Spartan, there to gather, if I may,
 Some hopes that still Ulysses lives, I go. 460

He ended, and in accents shrill, that spoke
 Her tender fears, his gentle nurse exclaim'd:

My child! ah, wherefore hath a thought so rash
 Possess'd thee? whither, only and belov'd,
 Seek'st thou to ramble, travelling, alas!
 To distant climes? Ulysses is no more;
 Dead lies the hero in some land unknown,
 And thou no sooner shalt depart, than these
 Will plot to slay thee, and divide thy wealth.
 No, stay with us who love thee. Need is none, 470
 That thou shouldst on the barren Deep distress
 Encounter, roaming without hope or end.

Whom, prudent, thus answer'd Telemachus:
 Take courage, nurse! for not without consent
 Of the Immortals I have thus resolv'd.
 But swear, that till eleven days be past,
 Or twelve, or till, inquiry made, she learn
 Herself my going, thou wilt nought impart
 Of this my purpose to my mother's ear,
 Lest all her beauties fade, by grief impair'd. 480

He ended, and the ancient matron swore

Solemnly by the Gods; which done, she fill'd
With wine the vessels, and the skins with meal,
And he returning join'd the throng below.

Then Pallas, Goddess azure-ey'd, her thoughts
Elsewhere directing, all the city rang'd
In semblance of Telemachus, each man
Exhorting, at the dusk of eve, to seek
The gallant ship, and from Noëmon, son
Renown'd of Phronius, ask'd, herself, a bark, 490
Which, soon as ask'd, he promis'd to supply.

Now set the sun, and twilight dimm'd the ways,
When, drawing down his bark into the Deep,
He gave her all her furniture, oars, arms,
And tackle, such as well-built galleys bear,
Then moor'd her in the bottom of the bay.
Mean time his mariners in haste repair'd
Down to the shore, for Pallas urg'd them on.
And now, on other purposes intent,
The Goddess sought the palace, where with dews 500
Of slumber drenching ev'ry suitor's eye,
She fool'd the drunkard multitude, and dash'd
The goblets from their idle hands away.
They through the city reel'd, all glad to leave
The dull carousal, when the slumb'rous weight
Oppressive on their eyelids once had fall'n.
Next Pallas azure-ey'd, in Mentor's form,
And with the voice of Mentor, summoning
Telemachus abroad, him thus bespake:

Telemachus! already at their oars 510
Sit all thy fellow-voyagers, and wait
Thy coming; linger not, but haste away.

This said, Minerva led him thence, whom he
With nimble steps pursu'd, and, on the shore
Arriv'd, found all his mariners prepar'd,
Whom thus the princely voyager address'd:

Haste ye, my friends! and from the palace bring
The stores, which all stand ready; but the queen
Of this my purpos'd voyage nothing knows,
Nor the queen's women aught, save one alone. 520

He spake, and led them; they, obedient, brought
All down, and, as Ulysses' son enjoin'd,
Within the gallant bark the charge bestow'd.

Then, led by Pallas, went the prince on board,
 Where down they sat, the Goddess in the stern,
 And at her side Telemachus. The crew
 Cast loose the hawsers, and, embarking, fill'd
 The benches. Blue-ey'd Pallas from the west
 Call'd forth propitious breezes; fresh they curl'd
 The sable deep, and, sounding, swept the waves. 530
 He, loud exhorting them, his people bade
 Hand brisk the tackle; they obedient rear'd
 The pine-tree mast, which in its socket deep
 They lodg'd, then strain'd the cordage, and with
 thongs
 Well-twisted, drew the shining sail aloft.
 A land-breeze fill'd the canvass, and the flood
 Roar'd as she went against the steady bark,
 That ran with even course her liquid way.
 The rigging thus of all the galley set,
 Their beakers crowning high with wine, they hail'd
 The ever living Gods, but above all 541
 Minerva, daughter azure-ey'd of Jove.
 Thus, all night long the galley, and till dawn
 Had brighten'd into day, cleav'd swift the flood.

BOOK III.

Argument.

Telemachus, arriving at Pylus, inquires of Nestor concerning Ulysses. Nestor relates to him all that he knows or has heard of the Grecians since their departure from Troy; but not being able to give him any satisfactory account of Ulysses, refers him to Menelaus. At evening Minerva quits Telemachus, but discovers herself in going. Nestor sacrifices to the Goddess, and, the solemnity ended, Telemachus sets forth for Sparta in one of Nestor's chariots, accompanied by Nestor's son Pisistratus.

THE sun, emerging from the lucid waves,
Ascended now the brazen vault with light
For the inhabitants of Earth and Heav'n,
When in their bark at Pylus they arriv'd,
City of Neleus. On the shore they found
The people sacrificing; bulls they slew
Black without spot to Neptune azure-hair'd.
On ranges nine of seats they sat; each range
Receiv'd five hundred, and to each they made
Allotment equal of nine sable bulls. 10
The feast was now begun; these tasting sat
The entrails, those stood off'ring to the God
The thighs, his portion, when the Ithacans
Push'd right ashore, and, furling close the sails,
And making fast their moorings, disembark'd.
Forth came Telemachus by Pallas led,
Whom thus the Goddess azure-ey'd address'd:

Telemachus! there is no longer room
For bashful fear, since thou hast cross'd the flood,
With purpose to inquire what land conceals 20
Thy father, and what fate hath follow'd him.
Advance at once to the equestrian chief,
Nestor, within whose bosom lies, perhaps,
Advice well worthy of thy search; entreat

An answer at his lips sincere and true,
Who will not lie, for he is passing wise.

To whom Telemachus discreet replied :
Ah Mentor ! how can I advance, how greet
A chief like him, unpractis'd as I am
In manag'd phrase ? Shame bids the youth beware,
How he accosts the man of many years. 51

But thus the blue-ey'd Goddess in return :
Telemachus ! Thou wilt, in part, thyself
Fit speech devise, and Heav'n will give the rest ;
For thou wast neither born, nor hast been train'd
To manhood, under unpropitious Pow'rs.

So saying, Minerva led him thence, whom he
With nimble steps attending, soon arriv'd
Among the multitude. There Nestor sat,
And Nestor's sons, while, busily the feast 40
Tending, his num'rous followers roasted, some,
The viands, some transfix'd them with the spits.
They, seeing guests arriv'd, together all
Advanc'd, and, grasping courteously their hands,
Invited them to sit ; but first, the son
Of Nestor, young Pisistratus, approach'd,
Who, fast'ning on the hand of both, beside
The banquet plac'd them, where the beach was spread
With fleeces, and where Thrasymedes sat,
His brother, and the hoary chief his sire. 50
To each a portion of the inner parts
He gave, then fill'd a golden cup with wine,
Which, tasted first, he to the daughter bore
Of Jove the Thund'rer, and her thus bespake :

Now, stranger ! worship Neptune ; for the feast,
As it hath chanc'd, which ye arrive to share
Is sacred to the Sov'reign of the waves ;
Libation therefore, first, thyself perform,
And supplication, as thy duty bids,
Then give the goblet of delicious wine 60
To this thy fellow-voyager, that he
Pour forth libation also ; for I deem
Him wont to pray ; since all of ev'ry land
Need succour from the Gods. But he is young ;
Coeval with myself ; and, for that cause,
I shall present the goblet first to thee.

He ceas'd, and to her hand consign'd the cup,

Which Pallas gladly from a youth receiv'd
 So just and wise, who to herself had first
 The golden cup presented. Then she pray'd, 70
 And thus the Sov'reign of the Seas ador'd:

Hear, earth-encircler Neptune! O vouchsafe
 To us thy suppliants the desir'd effect
 Of this our voyage; glory first bestow
 On Nestor and his offspring both, then grant
 To all the Pylians such a gracious boon,
 As shall requite their noble off'ring well.
 Grant also to Telemachus and me
 To voyage hence possess'd of what we sought,
 When hither in our sable bark we came. 80

So Pallas pray'd, and her own pray'r herself
 Accomplish'd. To Telemachus she gave
 The splendid goblet next, and in his turn
 His pray'r Ulysses' offspring also made.
 And now (the banquet from the spits withdrawn)
 They next distributed sufficient share
 To each, and all were sumptuously regal'd.
 At length (both hunger satisfied and thirst)
 Thus Nestor, the Gerenian chief, began:

Now with more seemliness we may inquire, 90
 After repast, what guests we have receiv'd.
 Our guests! who are ye? Whence have ye the waves
 Plough'd hither? Come ye to transact concerns
 Commercial, or at random roam the deep
 Like pirates, who, with mischief charg'd and wo
 To foreign states, oft hazard life themselves?

Him answer'd, bolder now, but still discreet,
 Telemachus. For Pallas had his heart
 With manly courage arm'd, that he might ask
 From Nestor tidings of his absent sire, 100
 And win, himself, distinction and renown.

O Nestor, Neleus' son, glory of Greece!
 Thou askest whence we are. I tell thee whence.
 From Ithaca, by the umbrageous woods
 Of Neritus o'erhung, by private need,
 Not public, urg'd we come. Desire to learn
 The mighty deeds of my illustrious sire,
 Ulysses, if I may, me prompted forth;
 For Fame reports him, by thy prudent aid,

Long since the conqu'ror of imperial Troy. 110
 Full well we know, where all besides, who fought
 At Ilium found a miserable end,
 But of Ulysses' fate Saturnian Jove
 Denies us knowledge; for inquiry gains
 No clear report from any, where he died,
 If on the continent in battle slain,
 Or overwhelm'd by billows of the Deep.
 Now, therefore, whether thou beheld'st, thyself,
 Ulysses' death, or at some wand'rer's lips
 Hast learn'd it, suppliant at thy kness I beg 120
 The sad recital; for no common woes
 Where his allotted portion from the womb.
 Neither through pity, or o'erstrain'd respect,
 Flatter me, but explicit all relate
 Which thou hast witness'd. If my noble sire
 E'er gratified thee by performance just
 Of word or deed at Ilium, where ye fell
 So num'rous slain in fight, O, recollect
 Now his fidelity, and tell me true.

Then Nestor thus, Gerenian hero old : 130
 Young friend ! since thou remind'st me, by thy suit,
 Of all the woes which on those hostile shores
 We Grecians with such fortitude endur'd,
 Both when, in quest of spoil, we roam'd the Deep,
 Achilles leading us, and in the siege
 Of Priam's royal city, learn'd the truth—
 Then all the chief Achaians bled and died.
 There warlike Ajax lies, there Peleus' son;
 There too Patroclus, like the Gods themselves
 In council, and my son beloved there, 140
 Brave, virtuous, swift of foot, and bold in fight,
 Antilochus. Nor are these sorrows all;
 What tongue of mortal man could all relate?
 Shouldst thou, abiding here, five years employ
 Or six, inquiring of the woes endur'd
 By the Achaians, ere thou shouldst have learn'd
 All, thou wouldst leave us, weary of the tale.
 For stratagems of ev'ry kind nine years
 We fram'd against them, and Saturnian Jove
 Scarce crown'd the difficult attempt at last. 150
 There, no competitor in wiles well plann'd

Ulysses found, so far were all surpass'd
 In shrewd invention by thy noble sire,
 If thou indeed art his, as sure thou art,
 Whose sight breeds wonder in me, and thy speech
 His speech resembles more than might be deem'd
 Within the scope of years so green as thine.
 There, never in opinion, or in voice,
 Illustrious Ulysses and myself
 Divided were, but, one in heart, contriv'd 160
 As best we might, the benefit of all.
 But when, Troy's lofty tow'rs in ashes laid,
 We thence embark'd, and, by the will of Heav'n,
 With disunited minds, then Jove ordain'd
 Our sorrowful return; for neither wise
 Were all, nor righteous, therefore many found
 A fate disastrous through the vengeful ire
 Of Jove-born Pallas, who between the sons
 Of Atreus sharp contention interpos'd.
 They, unadvisedly, nor less against 170
 Just order, summoning by night the Greeks
 To council, of whom many came with wine
 Oppress'd, promulgated the cause, for which
 They had conven'd the people. Then it was,
 That Menelaus bade the general host
 Their thoughts bend homeward o'er the sacred Deep,
 Which Agamemnon in no sort approv'd.
 His council was to stay them yet at Troy,
 That so he might assuage the dreadful wrath
 Of Pallas first by sacrifice and pray'r. 180
 Vain hope! he little thought how ill should speed
 That fond attempt; for, once provok'd, the Gods
 Are not with ease conciliated again.
 Thus stood the brothers, altercation hot
 Maintaining, till at length, up rose the Greeks
 With deaf'ning clamours, and with diff'ring minds.
 We slept the night, but teeming with disgust
 Mutual, for Jove great wo prepar'd for all.
 At dawn of day we drew our galleys down
 Into the sea, and hasty put on board 190
 The spoils and female captives. Half the host
 With Agamemnon, son of Atreus, chief
 Commander, tarried, and embarking, half

Push'd forth. Swift course we made, for God before
 Our gallant barks made smooth the monstrous Deep.
 At Tenedos arriv'd, we there perform'd
 Oblation to the Gods, ardent to reach
 Our native land; but unpropitious Jove,
 Not yet designing our arrival there,
 Involv'd us in dissension yet again. 200
 For all the crews attendant on the king,
 Thy noble sire, to gratify our chief,
 The son of Atreus, chose a diff'rent course,
 And steer'd their oary barks again to Troy.
 But I, assur'd that evil from the Gods
 Impended, gath'ring all my gallant fleet,
 Fled thence, in haste, and warlike Diomede,
 Exhorting his attendants, also fled.
 At length, the hero Menelaus join'd
 Our fleets at Lesbos; there he found us held 210
 In deep deliberation on the length
 Of way before us, whether we should steer
 Above the craggy Chios to the isle
 Psyria, that island holding on our left,
 Or under Chios by the wind-swept heights
 Of Mimas. Then we ask'd from Jove a sign,
 And by a sign vouchsaf'd he bade us cut
 The wide sea to Eubœa sheer athwart,
 So soonest to escape the threat'ned harm.
 Shrill sang the rising gale, and with swift prows 220
 Cleaving the fishy flood, we reach'd by night
 Geræstus; where arriv'd, we burn'd the thighs
 Of num'rous bulls to Neptune, who had safe
 Conducted us through all our perilous course.
 The fleet of Diomede in safety moor'd
 On the fourth day at Argos; but myself
 Held on my course to Pylus, nor the wind
 One moment thwarted us, or died away,
 When Jove had once commanded it to blow.

Thus, uninform'd, I have arriv'd, my son! 230
 Nor of the Grecians, who are sav'd have heard,
 Or who have perish'd; but what news soe'er
 I have obtain'd since my return, with truth
 I will relate, nor aught conceal from thee.

The warlike Myrmidons, as rumour speaks,

By Neoptolemus, illustrious son
 Of brave Achilles, led, have safe arriv'd;
 Safe Philoctetes also, son renown'd
 Of Pæas; and Idomeneus at Crete
 Hath landed all his foll'wers, who survive 240
 The bloody war; the waves have swallow'd none.
 Ye have yourselves doubtless, although remote,
 Of Agamemnon heard, how he return'd,
 And how Ægisthus cruelly contriv'd
 For him a bloody welcome, but himself
 Hath with his own life paid the murd'rous deed.
 Good therefore is it, when, the father slain,
 A son survives him; since, although a youth,
 Orestes hath aveng'd his glorious sire,
 Slaying Ægisthus, by whose arts he died. 250
 And thou, my youthful friend, whose form robust
 And fair proportions with delight I view,
 Be thou brave also, that renown like his
 Thou mayst acquire with ages yet to come.

To whom Telemachus discreet replied:
 O Nestor! Neleus' son! The pride of Greece!
 And righteous was that vengeance; *his* renown
 Achaia's sons shall far and wide diffuse,
 To future times transmitting it in song.
 Ah! would that such ability the Gods 260
 Would grant to me, that I, as well, the deeds
 Might punish of our suitors, whose excess
 Enorm, and whose bitter taunts I feel
 Continual, object of their subtle hate.
 But not for me such happiness the Gods
 Have twin'd into my thread; no, not for me
 Or for my father. Patience is our part.

To whom Gerenian Nestor thus replied:
 Young friend! (since thou remind'st me of that theme)
 Fame here reports, that num'rous suitors haunt 270
 Thy palace for thy mother's sake, and there
 Much evil perpetrate in thy despite.
 But say, endur'st thou willingly their acts
 Imperious, or because the people, sway'd
 By some response oracular, incline
 Against thee? But who knows? the time may come,
 When to his home restor'd, either alone,

Or aided by the force of all the Greeks,
 Ulysses may avenge the wrong ; at least
 Would Pallas thee so favour, as of late 280
 Ulysses in the fatal field of Troy
 (For never such apparent aid I saw
 Giv'n by the Gods, as to thy father there);
 Would but the Goddess to thyself extend
 Like fond solicitude, some few of those
 Should dream, perchance, of wedlock never more.

Then answer thus Telemachus return'd :
 O Nestor ! never shall I see fulfill'd
 That word of thine ; it passes all belief,
 All hope, and overwhelms me with amaze ; 290
 No—were I conscious, that the Gods themselves
 Such good design'd me, I should yet despair.

But him the blue-ey'd Goddess thus reprov'd :
 Telemachus ! what word was that which leap'd
 The iv'ry guard, that should have fenc'd it in ?
 A God, so willing, could with utmost ease
 Save any man, howe'er remote. Myself
 Far happier should esteem a late return
 After much sorrow, to my native home,
 Than to arrive there only to be slain, 300
 Like Agamemnon, whom his faithless wife
 And her adult'rer slew ; but mortal man,
 Once seiz'd by Fate, must perish ; nor the Gods
 Themselves can save him, love him as they may.

To whom Telemachus discreet, replied :
 Howe'er it interest us, let us leave
 This question, Mentor ! He, I am assur'd,
 Returns no more, but hath already found
 A sad, sad fate by the decree of Heav'n.
 But I would now interrogate again 310
 Nestor, and on a different theme ; for him
 In human rights I judge, and laws expert,
 And in all knowledge beyond other men ;
 For he hath govern'd, as report proclaims,
 Three generations ; therefore in my eyes
 He wears the awful impress of a God.
 O Nestor, son of Neleus, tell me true ;
 The means, the manner of Atrides' death—
 Relate them—Where, in that tremendous hour,

Was Menelaus? By what cruel stroke 320
Contriv'd Ægisthus, subtle as he was,
To slay so much a nobler than himself?
Had not the brother of the monarch reach'd
Achaian Argos yet, but, wand'ring still
In other climes, by his long absence gave
Ægisthus courage for that bloody deed?

Whom answer'd the Gerenian chief renown'd :
My son ! I will inform thee true ; mean time
Thy own suspicions border on the fact.
Had Menelaus, hero amber-hair'd, 330
Ægisthus found alive at his return
From Ilium, never on *his* bones the Greeks
Had heap'd a tomb, but dogs and rav'ning fowls
Had torn him lying in the open field
Far from the town, nor him had woman wept
Of all in Greece, for heinous was his crime.
But we, in many an arduous task engag'd,
Lay before Ilium ; he, the while, secure
Within the green retreats of Argos, found
Occasion apt by flatt'ry to delude 340
The spouse of Agamemnon ; she at first
(The royal Clytemnestra) firm refus'd
The deed dishonourable (for she bore
A virtuous mind, and at her side a bard
Attended ever, whom the king, to Troy
Departing, had appointed to the charge).
But when the Gods, that he might perish, form'd
The snare which caught Ægisthus, he convey'd
The bard into a desert isle remote,
Where leaving him to rav'nous birds a prey, 350
The queen he led, not willing less than he,
To his own mansion. Num'rous thighs he burn'd
On all their hallow'd altars to the Gods,
And hung with tap'stry, images, and gold
Their shrines, his great exploit past hope achiev'd.
We (Menelaus and myself) had sail'd
From Troy together ; but when we approach'd
Sunium, headland of th' Athenian shore,
There Phœbus, sudden, with his gentle shafts
Slew Menelaus' pilot, while he steer'd 360
The volant bark, Phrontis, Onetor's son,

A mariner past all expert, whom none
 In steerage match'd, what time the tempest roar'd.
 Here, therefore, Menelaus was detain'd,
 Giving his friend due burial, and his rites
 Funereal celebrating, though in haste
 Still to proceed. But when, with all his fleet
 The wide sea traversing, he reach'd at length
 Malea's lofty foreland in his course,
 Rough passage, then, and perilous he found. 370
 Shrill blasts the Thund'rer pour'd into his sails,
 And wild waves sent him mountainous. His ships
 There scatter'd, some to the Cydonian coast
 Of Crete he push'd, near where the Jordan flows.
 Beside the confines of Gortyna stands,
 Amid the gloomy flood, a smooth rock, steep
 Toward the sea, against whose leftward point,
 Phæstus, the Southwind rolls the sea amain,
 Whose mighty surf the rock, though small, repels,
 Hither with part he came, and scarce the crews 380
 Themselves escap'd, while the huge billows broke
 Their ships against the rocks; but five were driv'n
 By winds and waves to the Ægyptian shore.

Thus he, provision gath'ring as he went
 And gold abundant, roam'd to distant lands
 And nations of another tongue. Mean time
 Ægisthus, these enormities at home
 Devising, slew Atrides, and supreme
 Rul'd the subjected land; sev'n years he reign'd
 In opulent Mycenæ; but the next, 390
 To him an evil year, from Athens brought
 Orestes home, and young Orestes slew
 (Glorious revenge!) the slayer of his sire.
 Orestes, therefore, the funereal rites
 Performing to his shameless mother's shade,
 And to her lustful paramour, a feast
 Gave to the Argives; on which self same day
 The warlike Menelaus, with his ships
 All treasure-laden to the brink, arriv'd.

And thou, young friend! from thy forsaken home
 Rove not long time remote, thy treasures left 401
 With inmates proud as they; lest, much consum'd,
 They share the remnant, and thy voyage thence

In quest of tidings prove a fruitless toil.
 But hence to Menelaus is the course
 To which I counsel thee; for he hath come
 Of late from distant lands, whence none could hope
 A safe return, whom storms had first compell'd
 To plough the billows of so wide a sea;
 A gulf so vast, that not the birds of Heav'n 410
 From side to side might pass it in a year.
 Go, then, with ship and shipmates, or if more
 The land delight thee, steeds thou shalt not want
 Or chariot, and my sons shall be thy guides
 To noble Lacedemon, the abode
 Of Menelaus; ask from him the truth,
 Who will not lie, for he is passing wise.

While thus he spake, the sun declin'd, and night
 Approaching, blue-ey'd Pallas interpos'd:

O ancient king! well hast thou spoken all. 420
 But now delay not. Cut ye forth the tongues,
 And mingle wine, that (Neptune first invok'd
 With due libation, and the other Gods)
 We may repair to rest; for even now
 The sun is sunk, and it becomes us not,
 To make a banquet sacred to the Gods
 Exceed the limits of a sober hour.

So spake Jove's daughter; they obedient heard.
 The heralds then pour'd water on their hands,
 And filling high the cups, attendant youths 430
 Serv'd them from right to left. Next all the tongues
 They cast into the fire, and ev'ry guest
 Arising pour'd libation to the Gods.
 Libation made, and all with wine suffic'd,
 Godlike Telemachus and Pallas both
 Would have return'd, incontinent, on board,
 But Nestor urg'd them still to be his guests:

Jove and the Gods forbid, that ye should seek
 Your galley now, me leaving as a wretch
 Necessitous and wanting couch-attire, 440
 Rugs and warm mantles for the soft repose
 Of me and of my guests, for I possess
 Large stores of each; nor shall Ulysses' son
 Hence to a galley's deck for sleep retire,
 While Nestor lives; and dying may I leave

An offspring ever prompt to entertain
The worthy guest, come hither whoso may.

To whom the Goddess of the azure eyes :
Old chief ! thou hast well said, and reason bids
Telamachus thy kind commands obey. 450

Let *him* attend thee hence, that he may sleep
Beneath thy roof; but I return on board
Myself, to instruct my people and to give
All needful orders; for among them none
Is old as I, but they are youths alike,
Coevals of Telemachus, with whom
They have embark'd for friendship's sake alone.
I therefore will repose myself on board
This night, and to the Caucons bold in arms
Will sail to-morrow, to demand arrears 460

Long time unpaid, and of no small amount.
But, since he is become thy guest, afford
My friend a chariot, and a son of thine
Who shall direct his way, nor let him want
Of all thy steeds the swiftest and the best.

The Goddess said, and in an eagle's form
Flew swiftly thence. Amazement at the sight
Seiz'd all beholders; hoary Nestor, fill'd
With wonder, gaz'd, and grasping, as he stood,
The hand of young Telemachus, exclaim'd : 470

Nor sordid thou, my friend ! nor prone to fear
Shalt prove hereafter, whom the Gods attend
Thus early; for of all th' Olympian Pow'rs
None other now than Pallas have we seen,
Jove's awful daughter, who with honour crown'd
So oft thy father, where the Grecians fought.

But thou, O queen ! compassionate us all,
Myself, my sons, my consort; give to each
A glorious name, and I to thee will give
For sacrifice a heifer of the year, 480
Untam'd, gall'd never by the pond'rous yoke,
And will incase her horns with hammer'd gold.

So Nestor pray'd, whom Pallas gracious heard.
Then the Gerenian warrior old, before
His sons and sons-in-law, to his abode
Magnificent proceeded; they (arriv'd
Within the splendid palace of the king)

On thrones and couches sat in order rang'd,
Whom Nestor welcom'd, charging high the cup
With wine of richest sort, which she, who kept 490
That treasure, now in the eleventh year
First broach'd, unsealing the delicious juice,
With this the hoary senior fill'd a cup,
And to the daughter of Jove ægis-arm'd,
Pouring libation, offer'd fervent pray'r.

When all had made libation, and no wish
Remain'd of more, then each to rest retir'd,
And Nestor, the Gerenian warrior old,
To a carv'd couch led forth Ulysses' son
In his own sounding portico prepar'd. 500
Beside him he bade sleep the spearman bold,
Pisistratus, a gallant youth, the sole
Unwedded in his house of all his sons.
Himself in the interiour palace lay,
Where couch and splendid cov'ring for his use
Provided by the consort queen he found.

But when Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
Had ting'd the East, arising from his bed,
Gerenian Nestor issu'd forth, and sat
Before his palace-gate, on the white stones 510
Resplendent as with oil, on which of old
His father Neleus had been wont to sit,
In council like a God; but he had sought,
By destiny dismiss'd long since, the shades.
On those stones therefore, guardian of the Greeks,
Sat Nestor now, his sceptre in his hand,
And thither from their chambers also came,
T' encircle him around, his num'rous sons,
Aretus, Stratius, Perseus, Echephron,
And godlike Thrasymedes; after whom 520
Came, sixth and last, Pisistratus. Beside
Their ancient sire, Telemachus they plac'd,
And the Gerenian hero thus began:

Be quick, my sons! to serve me; for in haste
I would propitiate of all Pow'rs above
Minerva first, of whose arrival here,
To share our hallow'd feast, no doubt remains.
Seek one in haste the pasture, and command
The herdsman that he drive a heifer home;

Another—from his bark bring all the friends 530
Of young Telemachus, save only two;
And let a third find instantly the smith
Laerceus, that he come t' enwrap with gold
The victim's horns. Abide ye here, the rest,
And bid my female train (for I intend
A banquet) with all diligence provide
Seats, stores of wood, and water from the rock.

He said, whom instant all obey'd. The ox
Came from the field, and from the gallant ship
The shipmates of the brave Telemachus; 540
Next, charg'd with all his implements of art,
His mallet, anvil, pincers, came the smith,
To give the horns their gilding; also came
Pallas herself to her own sacred rites.
Then, Nestor, hoary warrior, furnish'd gold,
Which, hammer'd thin, the artist wrapp'd around
The victim's horns, that seeing him attir'd
So costly, Pallas might the more be pleas'd.
Stratius and brave Echephron introduc'd
The victim by her horns; Aretus brought 550
A laver in one hand, with flow'rs emboss'd,
And in his other hand a basket stor'd
With cakes; while warlike Thrasymedes, arm'd
With his long-hafted axe, prepar'd to smite
The ox, and Perseus to receive the blood.
The hoary Nestor consecrated first
Both cakes and water, and with earnest pray'r
To Pallas, gave the forelock to the flames.

When all had pray'd, and strew'd with crumbled
cakes
The heifer o'er, then, hasting to his work, 560
The godlike Thrasymedes with his axe
Her tough neck-tendons sever'd, and she fell.
At once, the daughters of the Pylian king,
His sons' fair consorts, and the consort queen,
Daughter first-born of Clymenus, the chaste
Eurydice, with mingled voices shrill
Upsent their suppliant wailings to the skies.
The royal youths then raising from the ground
The heifer's head, sustain'd it, while she pour'd
Her ebbing life's last current, in the throat 570

Pierc'd by Pisistratus, the prince of men.
 Soon as the sable blood had ceas'd, and life
 Had left the victim, spreading her abroad,
 With nice address they parted at the joint
 Her thighs, and wrapp'd them in the double cawl
 Which with crude slices thin they overspread.
 The hoary king, himself, with incense strew'd
 The flaming brands, and pour'd libation forth
 Of sable wine; while, rang'd on either side,
 The princes held the spits. The thighs consum'd, 580
 They ate th' interior part, then, slicing thin
 The remnant, pierc'd and held it to the fire.
 Mean time the youngest of the daughters fair
 Of Nestor, beauteous Polycaste, lav'd,
 Anointed, and in vest and tunic cloth'd
 Telemachus, who, so refresh'd, stepp'd forth
 From the bright laver graceful as a God,
 And took his seat at ancient Nestor's side.
 The viands dress'd, and from the spits withdrawn,
 They sat to share the feast, and princely youths 590
 Arising, gave them wine in cups of gold.
 When neither hunger now nor thirst remain'd
 Unsated, thus Gerenian Nestor spake:

My sons, arise! lead forth the sprightly steeds,
 And yoke them, that Telemachus may go.

So spake the chief, to whose command his sons
 Obedient, yok'd in haste the rapid steeds,
 And she who held in charge his household stores,
 Within the chariot wine and bread dispos'd,
 With viands, such as regal state requires. 600

Telemachus into the chariot first
 Ascended, and beside him, next, his place
 Pisistratus the son of Nestor took,
 Then seiz'd the reins, and lash'd the coursers on,
 They, nothing loth, sprang swiftly forth, and soon
 The lofty tow'rs of Pylus left remote.
 Thus, journeying, they shook on either side
 The yoke all day, and when the setting sun
 To dusky ev'ning had resign'd the roads,
 At Pheræ they arriv'd, and at the house 610
 Where dwelt Diocles, whose illustrious sire,
 Orsilochus, from Alpheus sprang, repos'd,

But when Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
 Look'd rosy forth, then, binding to the yoke
 Their steeds again, they mounted. Nestor's son
 Urg'd through the vestibule and sounding porch
 His coursers, of themselves not slack to go.
 A corn-invested land receiv'd them next,
 And there they brought their journey to a close,
 So rapidly they sped; and now the sun 620
 Went down, and even-tide dimm'd all the ways.

BOOK IV.

Argument.

Telemachus, with Pisistratus, arrives at the palace of Menelaus, from whom he receives some fresh information concerning the return of the Grecians, and is in particular told, on the authority of Proteus, that his father is detained by Calypso. The suitors, plotting against the life of Telemachus, lie in wait to intercept him in his return to Ithaca. Penelope being informed of his departure, and of their designs to slay him, becomes inconsolable, but is relieved by a dream sent to her from Minerva.

IN hollow Lacedæmon's spacious vale
Arriving, to the residence they drove
Of royal Menelaus; him they found
In his own palace, all his num'rous friends
Regaling at a nuptial banquet giv'n
Both for his daughter and the prince his son.
His daughter to renown'd Achilles' heir
He sent, to whom he had at Troy engag'd
To give her, and the Gods now made her his.
With chariots and with steeds he sent her forth 10
To Phthia's glorious city, where he reign'd.
But to his son he gave a Spartan fair,
Alector's daughter; from a handmaid sprang.
That son to Menelaus in his age,
Brave Megapenthes; for the Gods vouchsaf'd
No child to Helen, after her who vied
With Venus' self in charms, Hermione.

Thus all the neighbour princes and the friends
Of noble Menelaus feasting sat
Within his spacious palace, among whom 20
A sacred bard sang sweetly to his harp;
While, in the midst, two dancers smote the ground
With measur'd steps responsive to his song.
Sudden, within the vestibule appear'd

Those two, Telemachus, illustrious youth,
And Nestor's son. Them, issuing from the hall,
The noble Eteoneus, of the train
Of Menelaus, saw; at once he ran
Across the palace to report the news
To his lord's ear, and, standing at his side, 50
With eager haste his tidings thus declar'd:

O Menelaus! Heav'n-descended chief!
Two guests arrive, both strangers, but alike
Resembling in their form the sons of Jove.
Say, shall we loose, ourselves, their rapid steeds,
Or hence dismiss them to some other host?

But Menelaus, hero golden-hair'd,
Indignant answer'd him: Boethe's son!
Thou wast not, Eteoneus, heretofore,
A babbler, who now pratest as a child. 40
We have ourselves arriv'd indebted much
To hospitality of other men,
If Jove shall, even here, some pause at last
Of wo afford us. Therefore loose, at once,
Their steeds, and introduce them to the feast.

He said, and, issuing, Eteoneus call'd
The brisk attendants to his aid, with whom
He loos'd their foaming coursers from the yoke.
Them first they bound to mangers, which with oats
And mingled barley they supplied, then thrust 50
The chariot sidelong to the splendid wall.
Themselves he, next, into the royal house
Conducted, who with wonder view'd the abode
Of the illustrious chief; for on all sides
As with the splendour of the sun or moon
The lofty dome of Menelaus blaz'd.
Sate, at length, with wonder at that sight,
They enter'd each a bath, and by the hands
Of maidens lav'd, and oil'd, and cloth'd again
With shaggy mantles and resplendent vests, 60
Sat both enthron'd at Menelaus' side.
And now a maiden charg'd with golden ew'r,
And with an ardent laver, pouring first
Pure water on their hands, supplied them next
With a bright table, which the maiden, chief
In office, furnish'd plenteously with bread

And dainties, remnants of the last regale.
Then came the sew'r, who with delicious meats
Of all kinds serv'd them, and with cups of gold;
And Menelaus, greeting each, began: 70

Eat and rejoice, and when ye shall have shar'd
Our nuptial banquet, we will then inquire
Who are ye both; for certain not from those
Whose generation perishes are ye,
But rather of some race of sceptred chiefs
Heav'n-born; the base have never sons like you.

So saying, he lifted from the board his own
Distinguish'd portion, and the fatted chine
Gave to his guests; the ready viands plac'd
Before them they with willing hands assail'd, 80
And when nor hunger, more, nor thirst they felt,
Telemachus, his head inclining close
To Nestor's son, thus whisper'd his amaze:

Dearest Pisistratus, observe, my friend!
How all the echoing palace with the light
Of brass, and gold of brightest lustre, shines,
Silver and ivory! for radiance such
Th' interiour mansion of Olympian Jove
I deem. What wealth, how various, how immense
Is here! astonish'd I survey the sight! 90

But Menelaus, whisper'd as they were,
His words heard not the less, and thus replied:

No mortal man, my children! may pretend
Comparison with Jove; his palace stands
For ever, and his treasures ne'er decay;
But mine small need hath any man to praise,
Or much admire; for, after num'rous toils
And perilous wand'rings o'er the stormy Deep,
In the eighth year at last I brought them home.
Cyprus, Phœnicia, Sidon, and the shores 100
Of Egypt, roaming without hope, I reach'd;
In distant Æthiopia thence arriv'd,
And Lybia, where the lambs their foreheads show
With budding horns defended soon as yean'd.
There thrice within the year the flocks produce;
Nor master there nor shepherd ever feels
A dearth of cheese, of flesh, or of sweet milk
Delicious, drawn from udders never dry.

While thus I roam'd collecting wealth from all
 Those shores, another, aided by the arts 110
 Of his pernicious spouse, of life bereav'd
 My brother treacherously, and when least
 He fear'd to loose it. Therefore little joy
 To me results from all that I possess.
 Your fathers (be those fathers who they may)
 These things have doubtless told you; for immense
 Have been my suff'rings, and I have destroy'd
 A palace well inhabited and stor'd
 With precious furniture in ev'ry kind;
 Such, that I would to Heav'n! I own'd at home 120
 Though but the third of it, and that the Greeks
 Who perish'd then, beneath the walls of Troy
 Remote from fertile Argos, still surviv'd.
 Yet while, sequester'd here, full oft I mourn
 My slaughter'd friends, by turns I sooth my soul
 With tears shed for them, and by turns I cease;
 Yet short, alas! and transient is the pause.
 But more than all, though sorrowful for all,
 I one deplore, rememb'ring whom, I loathe
 My wanted food, nor sleep's soft influence less. 130
 For of the Greeks in suff'rings or in toils
 None match'd Ulysses; but the doom of wo
 Was his, and ceaseless sorrow for his sake,
 Thus long a wand'rer, mine; nor have we learn'd,
 If still he lives, or have already died.
 Him doubtless old Laertes mourns, and him
 Discreet Penelope, nor less his son
 Telemachus, born newly when he sail'd.

So saying, he kindled in him strong desire
 To mourn his father; at his father's name 140
 Fast fell his tears to ground, and with both hands
 He spread his purple cloak before his eyes;
 Which Menelaus marking, doubtful sat,
 If he should leave him to lament his sire,
 Or question him, and tell him all at large.

While thus he doubted, Helen (as it chanc'd)
 Leaving her fragrant chamber, came, august
 As Dian, goddess of the golden bow.
 Adrasta, for her use, set forth a throne,
 Alcippe with soft arras cover'd it, 150

And Philo brought her silver basket, gift
 Of fair Alcandra, wife of Polybus,
 Whose mansion in Ægyptian Thebes is rich
 In untold treasure, and who gave, himself,
 Ten golden talents, and two silver baths,
 With two bright tripods to the Spartan prince,
 Beside what Helen from his spouse receiv'd;
 A golden spindle, and a basket wheel'd,
 Itself of silver, and its lip of gold.

That basket Philo, her own handmaid, plac'd 160
 At Helen's side, with slend'rest thread replete,
 On which infolded thick with purple wool
 The spindle lay. Her foot-stool'd throne she press'd,
 And, soon as seated, of her spouse inquir'd:

Know we, my Menelaus, dear to Jove!
 These guests of ours, and whence they have arriv'd?
 Erroneous I may speak, yet speak I must;
 In man or woman never have I seen
 Such likeness to another (wonder-fix'd
 I gaze) as in this stranger to the son 170
 Of brave Ulysses, whom that hero left
 New-born at home, when (shameless as I was)
 For my unworthy sake the Grecians sail'd
 To Ilium, with fierce rage of battle fir'd.

Then Menelaus thus, the golden-hair'd:
 Such likeness in him of Laertes' son
 Myself perceive; hands, feet, expressive eyes,
 Fair open brows, and looks of kindred hue.
 And, even now, when, calling him to mind,
 I spake of brave Ulysses, and his toils 180
 Endur'd for me, his starting tears I mark'd,
 Which with his purple cloak he sought to hide.

To whom the son of Nestor thus replied:
 Atrides! Menelaus! chief renown'd!
 He is in truth his son, as thou hast said;
 But he is modest, and would much himself
 Condemn, if, at his first arrival here,
 He should loquacious seem and bold to thee,
 To whom we listen, captiv'd by thy voice,
 As if some God had spoken. As for me, 190
 Nestor, my father, the Gerenian chief
 Bade me conduct him hither, for he wish'd

To see thee, that some word or deed of thine
 Might sooth his sorrow; for what grief soe'er
 The son sustains, who finds not at his home
 Father or friend to succour him, with such
 Telemachus is charg'd; *His* father roams,
 And none hath he t' avenge him in his stead.

To whom the hero amber-hair'd replied:
 Ye Gods! the offspring of indeed a friend 200
 Hath reach'd my house, of one who hath endur'd
 Full many an arduous conflict for my sake;
 And much I purpos'd, had Olympian Jove
 Vouchsaf'd us prosp'rous passage o'er the Deep,
 To have receiv'd him with such friendship here
 As none beside. In Argos I had then
 Founded a city for him, and had rais'd
 A palace for himself; I would have brought
 The hero hither, and his son, with all
 His people, and with all his wealth, some town 210
 Evacuating for his sake, of those
 Rul'd by myself, and nearest to my own.
 Thus situate, we had often interchang'd
 Sweet converse: nor had other cause at last
 Our friendship terminated or our joys,
 Than death's black cloud o'ershad'wing him or me.
 But pleasures pure as those had envy mov'd
 In Jove himself; who, of Achaia's sons,
 Hath intercepted from his native shores
 The hapless Laertiades alone. 220

So saying, he kindled the desire to weep
 In ev'ry bosom. Argive Helen wept,
 Jove's daughter; wept Telemachus as fast
 And Menelaus; nor with tearless eyes
 Pisistratus remain'd, who call'd to mind
 Antilochus by the illustrious son
 Of bright Aurora slain; rememb'ring whom,
 His speech to Menelaus thus he turn'd:

Atrides! ancient Nestor, when of late
 Conversing with him we remember'd thee, 230
 Pronounc'd thee wise beyond all humankind.
 Now therefore, let not even my advice
 Displease thee. It affords me no delight
 To intermingle tears with my repast,

And soon, Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
Will tinge the orient. Not that I account
The mourner, whomsoever he lament,
Blameworthy, since, to sheer the locks and weep,
Is all we can for the unhappy dead.

I also have my sorrow, call'd to mourn 240
One, not the meanest of Achaia's sons,
My brother; him I cannot but suppose
To thee well-known, although unknown to me
Who saw him never; but report proclaims
Antilochus superiour to the most,
In speed superiour, and in feats of arms.

To whom, the hero of the yellow locks:
Ah, my young friend! since nought, which thou hast
said,

Or recommended now, would have disgrac'd
A man of years maturer far than thine 250

(For wise thy father is, and such art thou,
And easy is it to discern the son
Of such a father, whom Saturnian Jove
In marriage both and at his birth ordain'd
To great felicity; for he hath giv'n
To Nestor gradually to sink at home
Into old age, and, while he lives, to see
His sons past others wise, and skill'd in arms),
The grief, which seiz'd us suddenly, shall cease.

Come therefore—now to our repast again— 260
Pour water on our hands, for we shall find
(Telemachus and I) no dearth of themes
For mutual converse when the morrow comes.

He ended; then, Asphalion, at his word,
Servant of glorious Menelaus, pour'd
Pure water on their hands, and they the feast
Before them with keen appetite assail'd.

But Helen, Jove's fair daughter, to compose
Their troubled spirits, with a sudden hand
Infus'd into the wine of which they drank 270

A drug most potent to suppress or grief
Or anger, and oblivion to induce
Of all past evil. Whosoe'er his wine
So medicated drinks, he will not bathe
His cheek all day with trickling tears, although

His father and his mother both were dead,
 Nor even though his brother or his son
 Had fall'n in battle, and before his eyes.
 Such drugs of sov'reign use had Helen brought
 Erewhile to Sparta, Polydamna's grief, 280
 Wife of Ægyptian Thone; for Ægypt teems
 With drugs of various pow'rs; salubrious some
 With wine receiv'd, and some of deadliest kind,
 Nor dwells on Earth a race that may pretend,
 In healing arts, equality with them,
 For they are genuine sons of Pæon all.
 That drug infus'd, she bade her servant pour
 The bev'rage forth, and thus her speech resum'd:

Atrides! Menelaus! dear to Jove!
 These guests of ours are also nobly born, 290
 But good or evil is the lot of man
 As Jove ordains, sole arbiter of each.
 Now therefore, feasting at your ease reclin'd,
 Listen with pleasure, for myself, the while,
 Will matter seasonable interpose.
 I cannot all rehearse, nor even name
 (Omitting none) the conflicts and exploits
 Of brave Ulysses; but with what address
 Successful, one achievement he perform'd
 At Ilium, where Achaia's sons endur'd 300
 Such hardship, will I speak. Inflicting wounds
 Dishonourable on himself, he took
 A tatter'd garb, and like a serving-man
 Enter'd the spacious city of our foes.
 So clad, although of nobler port than he
 Might none be found, when in the camp of Greece,
 Some mendicant he seem'd. In such disguise
 He enter'd Ilium's gate. There, all alike
 Misdeem'd him; me alone he not deceiv'd,
 Who challeng'd him, but, shrew'd, he turn'd away. 310
 But bath'd, at length, anointed and attir'd
 At my command, and by a solemn oath
 Of mine assur'd, that not a Trojan there
 Should learn him for Ulysses, taught by me,
 Till he had reach'd, secure, the camp again,
 He told me all the counsel of the Greeks.
 Thus, many a Trojan slaughter'd, he rejoin'd

Achaia's host, full fraught, for future use,
 With wise remark on all that he had seen.
 Then wail'd the Trojan women, but delight 320
 My bosom fill'd, for with an alter'd heart
 I now regretted my forsaken home,
 And mourn'd the fatal crime, to which impell'd
 By Venus, I had sought a distant shore,
 Leaving my daughter, and my rightful Lord,
 Although in feature, form, and mind, a prince
 Uncensurable, and from blemish free.

Her answer'd then the hero golden-hair'd :
 Helen ! thou hast well spoken. All is true.
 I have the talents fathom'd and the minds 330
 Of num'rous heroes, and have travell'd far,
 Yet never saw I with these eyes in man
 Such firmness as the calm Ulysses own'd ;
 None such as in the hollow horse he prov'd,
 Where all our bravest sat, designing wo
 And bloody havock for the sons of Troy.
 Thou thither cam'st, incited, as it seem'd,
 By some Divinity, propitious more
 To Troy than to the Greeks, and on thy steps
 Waited Deiphobus. Thrice round about 340
 Thou didst encompass, and with curious hand
 Try the huge ambush, sounding forth, the while,
 The names of all our leaders, with the voice
 Well counterfeited of the wife of each.
 Tydides, and Ulysses, and myself
 Among the midmost seated, heard the call:
 We, starting both, had either left at once
 Our close concealment, or, at least, replied,
 But more discreet Ulysses interpos'd
 Firm hindrance, and controll'd the rash desire. 350
 Now, therefore, all were quiet, save alone
 Anticlus, still impatient to reply.
 But, pressing with both hands his op'ning lips
 Ulysses sav'd us; for the close constraint
 He still enforc'd, till Pallas led thee thence.

Then thus, discreet, Telemachus replied :
 Atrides ! Menelaus ! prince renown'd !
 Hard was his lot, whom these rare qualities
 Preserv'd not, neither had his dauntless heart

Been iron, had he scap'd his cruel doom. 360
But haste, and with dismissal to repose,
Now needful, gratify my friend and me.

He ceas'd; then Argive Helen gave command
To her attendant maidens to prepare
Beds in the portico with purple rugs
Resplendent, and with arras, overspread,
And cover'd warm with cloaks of shaggy pile.
Forth went the maidens, bearing each a torch,
And in the vestibule their beds prepar'd.

Then came a herald, who conducted forth 370
The weary guests, and there the noble son
Of Nestor slept, and there his youthful friend,
Telemachus! but in th' interior house
Atrides, with the loveliest of her sex
Beside him, Helen of the sweeping stole.

But when Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
Glow'd in the East, then from his couch arose
The warlike Menelaus, fresh attir'd;
His falchion o'er his shoulders slung, he bound
His sandals fair to his unsullied feet, 380
And godlike issuing from his chamber sat
Beside Telemachus, and thus began:

Hero! Telemachus! what urgent cause
Hath hither led thee, to the land far-fam'd
Of Lacedæmon o'er the spacious Deep?
Public concern or private? Tell me true.

To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied:
Atrides! Menelaus! prince renown'd!
News seeking of my sire, I have arriv'd.
My household is devour'd, my fruitful fields 390
Are desolated, and my palace fill'd
With enemies, who while they mutual wage
Proud competition for my mother's love,
My flocks unsparing slaughter, and my beeves.
Now, therefore, whether thou beheld'st, thyself,
Ulysses' death, or at some wand'rer's lips
Hast learn'd it, suppliant at thy knees I beg
The sad recital; for no common woes
Were his allotted portion from the womb.
Neither through pity or o'erstrain'd respect 400
Flatter me, but explicit all relate

Which thou hast witness'd. If my noble sire
E'er gratified thee by performance just
Of word or deed at Ilium, where ye fell
So num'rous slain in fight, O recollect
Now his fidelity, and tell me true!

Then Menelaus, sighing deep, replied:
Gods! their ambition is to reach the bed
Of a brave man, however base themselves.
But as it chances, when the hart hath laid 410
Her fawns new-yea'n'd, and sucklings yet, to rest
Within some dreadful lion's gloomy den,
She roams the hills, and in the grassy vales
Feeds heedless, till the lion, to his lair
Returning, rends them both; with such a force
Resistless shall Ulysses them destroy.
Jove, Pallas, and Apollo! O that such
As erst in well-built Lesbos, where he threw
Philomelides in a wrestling-match
With mighty force, when all the Greeks rejoic'd, 420
Such, now, Ulysses might assail them all!
Short life and bitter nuptials shall be theirs.
But now, such answer as with earnest suit
Thou hast implor'd, direct and true, receive;
For I will nought conceal, but will impart
All that the ancient Prophet of the Deep
Hath taught me, with exactest truth to thee.

The Gods, resenting my neglect to pile
Their altars high with hecatombs, detain'd
Me still in Ægypt, anxious to return, 430
For just observance of their high behests
Alone can please the Gods. There is an isle
Amid the billowy flood, Pharos by name,
In front of Ægypt, distant from her shore,
Far as a vessel, by a sprightly gale
Impell'd, may push her voyage in a day.
Its owns a quiet port, and many a ship
Finds wat'ring there from riv'lets on the coast.
There me the Gods kept twenty days, no breeze
Propitious granting, that might sweep the waves 440
And usher to her home the flying bark.
And now had our provision, all consum'd,
Left us exhausted, but a certain nymph

Pitied and saved me. Daughter fair was she
 Of mighty Proteus, Ancient of the Deep,
 Idothea nam'd; her most my sorrows mov'd;
 She found me wandering alone, remote
 From all my foll'wers, who around the isle
 The fishes snaring roam'd, by famine urg'd,
 And, standing at my side, me thus bespake: 450

Stranger! Thou sure art childish, or of heart
 Dull and insensible, or thy delight
 Is in distress and mis'ry. Wherefore else
 Within these island-limits art thou pent
 Thus long, nor end hast found of ling'ring here,
 Where famine wastes thy people day by day?

So spake the Goddess, and I thus replied:
 I tell thee, whosoever of the Pow'rs
 Divine thou art, that I am prison'd here
 Not willingly, but must have, doubtless, sinn'd 460
 Against the deathless tenants of the skies.
 Yet say (for the Immortals all things know)
 What God detains me, and my course forbids
 Hence to my country o'er the fishy Deep?

I spake; when thus the Goddess all-divine:
 Hear me, for all that I relate is true.
 A faithful seer, the ancient of the Deep,
 Immortal Proteus, the Ægyptian, haunts
 These shores, familiar with all Ocean's gulfs,
 Neptune's attendant ever, and esteem'd 470
 My father. Him if thou art able once
 To seize and bind, he will prescribe the course
 With all its measur'd distances, by which
 Thou shalt regain secure thy native shores.
 He will, moreover, at thy suit declare,
 Thou favour'd of the skies! what good, what ill
 Hath in thine house befall'n, while absent thou
 Thy voyage difficult perform'st and long.

She spake, and I replied—Thyself reveal
 By what effectual bands I may secure 480
 The ancient Deity marine, lest, warn'd
 Of my approach, he shun me and escape.
 Hard task for mortal hands to bind a God!

Then thus Idothea answer'd all-divine:
 I will inform thee true. Soon as the sun

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Hath climb'd the middle heav'ns, the prophet old,
 Emerging while the breezy zephyr blows,
 And cover'd with the scum of ocean, seeks
 His spacious cove, in which outstretch'd he lies.
 The phocæ also, rising from the waves, 490
 Offspring of beauteous Halosydna, sleep
 Around him, numerous, the fishy scent
 Exhaling rank of the unfathom'd flood.
 Thither conducting thee at early dawn
 I will dispose thee in some safe recess,
 But from among thy foll'wers thou shalt choose
 The bravest three in all thy gallant fleet.
 And now the artifices understand
 Of the old prophet of the sea. His herd
 Of phocæ numb'ring first, he will pass through 500
 And sum them all by fives, then lying down
 Will sleep as sleeps the shepherd with his flock.
 When ye shall see him stretch'd, then call to mind
 That moment all your prowess, and prevent,
 Howe'er he strive impatient, his escape.
 All changes trying, ev'ry reptile's form
 On Earth he will adopt, and he will seem
 A river now, and now devouring fire;
 But ye, the more he strives, with added force
 Strive also, and constrain him still the more. 510
 And when himself shall question you, restor'd
 To his own form, in which ye found him first
 Reposing, then from farther force abstain;
 Then, hero! loose the ancient of the Deep,
 And ask him what divinity impedes
 Thy voyage homeward o'er the fishy flood.

So saying, she plung'd into the billowy waste.
 I then, in various musings lost, my ships
 Along the sea-beach station'd, sought again,
 And when I reach'd my galley, on the shore 520
 We supp'd, and, at the fall of dewy night,
 On Ocean's side extended, took repose.
 But when Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
 Look'd rosy forth, beside the spacious Deep
 Proceeding, first I importun'd the Gods
 With fervent pray'r, then chose the fittest three
 For bold assault, and worthiest of my trust.

Mean while the Goddess deep into the gulfs
 Of Ocean plunging, from the bottom brought
 Four hides, the skins of phocæ newly slain, 530
 Forecasting to deceive her ancient sire.
 Four cradles in the sea-sand next she scoop'd,
 Then waited our approach. We soon arriv'd;
 When, side by side, she lodg'd us, and a skin
 Cast over each. But terrible we found
 Our ambush there, so rancid was the scent,
 And noisome to us all; for who could rest
 Extended at a foul sea-monster's side?
 But she a potent remedy devis'd
 Herself to save us, who applied beneath 540
 Our nostrils sweetest odours of divine
 Ambrosia, which the fishy scent subdu'd.
 All morning, patient watchers, there we lay;
 And now the num'rous phocæ from the Deep
 Emerging, slept along the shore, and he
 At noon came also, and perceiving there
 His fatted monsters, through the flock his course
 Took regular, and summ'd them; with the first
 He number'd us, suspicion none of fraud
 Conceiving, then couch'd also. We, at once, 550
 Loud shouting flew on him, and in our arms
 Constrain'd him fast; nor the sea-prophet old
 Call'd not incontinent his shifts to mind.
 First he became a long-man'd lion grim,
 A dragon then, a panther, a huge boar,
 A limpid stream, and an o'ershadowing tree.
 We persevering, held him, till at length
 The subtle sage, his ineffectual arts
 Resigning weary, question'd me, and said:
 Say, son of Atreus! what confed'rate Pow'r 560
 Assisted thy contrivance to ensnare
 And thus constrain me? what is thy desire?
 So he; to whom thus answer I return'd:
 O ancient prophet; guile alone suggests
 These questions, for thyself already know'st.
 Within these island-limits have I dwelt
 Long time, no means discov'ring of escape,
 Though famine wastes my people day by day.
 Yet say (for the Immortals all things know)

What God detains me, and my course forbids 570
Hence to my country o'er the fishy Deep?

So I; when thus the old one of the waves:
But thy plain duty was to have ador'd
Jove first in sacrifice, and all the Gods,
That then embarking, by propitious gales
Impell'd, thou might'st have reach'd thy country
soon.

For thou art destin'd ne'er to see again
Thy friends, thy palace, or thy native shores,
Till thou have reach'd once more the hallow'd flood
Of Ægypt, and with hecatombs ador'd 580
Devout the deathless tenants of the skies.
Then will they speed thee whither thou desir'st.

He ceas'd. I listen'd with a broken heart,
Thus bidden o'er the gloomy waves again
To Ægypt; voyage long and hard to achieve!
Yet, though in sorrow whelm'd, I thus presum'd:

Old prophet! I will all thy will perform.
But tell me, and the truth without disguise.
Have the Achaians with their ships arriv'd
All safe, whom Nestor left and I at Troy? 590
Hath none of all our heroes, since the siege,
Died prematurely, or on board his bark,
Or in th' embraces of his friends at home?

I spake, when answer thus the God return'd:
Atrides, why these questions? Better far
Were ignorance for thee; since, knowing all,
Thou wilt not long, I judge, from tears abstain.
No few have died, and many still survive
Of those Achaian chiefs; but two alone
In their return have perish'd, and a third 600
Still lives, imprison'd in the boundless Deep.

Ajax surrounded by his galleys died.
Him Neptune first against the bulky rocks,
The Gyræ, drove, but sav'd him from the Deep;
Nor had he perish'd, hated as he was
By Pallas, but for his presumptuous boast,
That him the Gods themselves should strive in vain
To overwhelm in Ocean's gulfy flood.
Neptune, that speech vain-glorious hearing, grasp'd
His trident, and the huge Gyræan rock 610

Smiting indignant, dash'd it half away ;
Part stood, and part, on which the boaster sat,
When first the brainsick fury seiz'd him, fell
Bearing him with it down into the gulfs
Of Ocean, where he drank the brine, and died.
But thy own brother in his barks escap'd
That fate, by Juno sav'd ; yet when, at length,
He should have gain'd Malea's craggy shore,
Then, by a sudden tempest caught, he flew
With many a groan far o'er the fishy Deep 620
To the land's utmost point, where once his home
Thyestes had, but where Thyestes' son
Dwelt then, Ægisthus. There the Gods appeas'd
The stormy blast, and, deeming most secure
His passage to Mycenæ thence by land,
He disembark'd. With calm delight he trod
The shore of Argos, kiss'd his native soil,
And, at a sight so welcome, wept for joy.
But not unseen he landed ; for a spy,
One whom the shrewd Ægisthus had seduc'd 630
By promise of two golden talents, mark'd
His coming from a rock where he had watch'd
The year complete, lest, passing unperceiv'd,
The king should reassert his right in arms.
Swift flew the spy with tidings to his lord,
And he incontinent this project fram'd
Insidious. Twenty men, the boldest hearts
Of all the people, from the rest he chose,
Whom he in ambush plac'd, and others charg'd
With diligence to spread the festal board. 640
With horses then and chariots forth he drove
Full-fraught with mischief, and, inviting home
The unsuspecting king, amid the feast
Slew him, as at his crib men slay an ox.
Nor of Atrides' or Ægisthus' train
A man escap'd ; all perish'd by the sword.

He ceas'd, I heard him with a broken heart,
And on the sands sat weeping ; life itself
Now fail'd to please me, and the light of day.
Long time I wept and roll'd me in the dust, 650
But, sated, ceas'd at length ; when thus his speech
The ancient Prophet of the Deep resum'd :

Atrides ! sit not weeping without end
Or measure here, since remedy thy grief
Will yield thee none, but with thy best dispatch
Strive for deliv'rance, and to reach again
Thy native home; for thou shalt either find
Ægisthus living, or, if haply first
Orestes have aveng'd his father's death,
At least shall witness his funereal fires. 660

He ceas'd, and I, afflicted as I was,
Yet felt my spirit at that word refresh'd,
And in wing'd accents answer thus return'd :

Of these I am inform'd ; but name the third
Who, dead or living, in the boundless Deep
Is still detain'd ; I dread, yet wish to hear.

So I : to whom thus Proteus in return :
Laertes' son, the lord of Ithaca—
Him in an island weeping I beheld,
Guest of the nymph Calypso, by constraint 670
Her guest, and from his native land withheld
By sad necessity ; for ships well-oar'd,
Or faithful foll'wers, hath he none, whose aid
Might speed him safely o'er the spacious flood.
But, Menelaus ! not for thee thy doom
Has death prepar'd in Argos—Thee the Gods
Have destin'd to the blest Elysian isles,
Earth's utmost bound'ries (Rhadamanthus there
For ever reigns, and there the humankind
Enjoy the easiest life; no snow is there, 680
No biting winter, and no drenching show'r,
But zephyr always gently from the sea
Breathes on them, to refresh the happy race);
Because that Helen is thy wife, and thee
They deem, for her sake, near allied to Jove.

So saying, he plung'd into the billowy waste.
I then, with my brave comrades, to the fleet
Return'd, deep-musing as I went, and sad.
No sooner had I reach'd my ship beside
The ocean, and we all had supp'd, than night 690
From Heav'n fell on us, and, at ease repos'd
Along the margin of the sea, we slept.
But when Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
Look'd rosy forth, drawing our galleys down

Into the sacred Deep, we rear'd again
 The mast, unfurl'd the sail, and to our seats
 On board returning, thresh'd the foamy flood.
 Once more, at length, within the hallow'd stream
 Of Ægypt mooring, on the shore I slew
 Whole hecatombs, and (the displeasure thus 700
 Of the immortal Gods appeas'd) I rear'd
 To Agamemnon's never-dying fame
 A tomb, and finishing it, sail'd again
 With such a gale from Heav'n vouchsaf'd, as sent
 My ships swift-scudding to the shores of Greece.
 But come—eleven days wait here, or twelve
 A guest with me, when I will send thee hence
 Nobly, and honour'd with illustrious gifts,
 With splendid chariot, with three princely steeds,
 And with a gorgeous cup, that to the Gods 710
 Libation pouring ever while thou liv'st
 From that same cup, thou mayst remember me.

Him, prudent, then answer'd Telemachus :
 Atrides ! spare to press my longer stay,
 For willing, so delightful is the sound
 Of thy recital, I could list'ning sit
 The year entire, rememb'ring neither home
 Nor parents more ; but my companions, left
 In Pylus, deem already my return
 Too long delay'd, whom thou wouldst still detain. 720
 What boon soe'er thou giv'st me, be it such
 As I may treasur'd keep ; for I will take
 No steeds to Ithaca, where glory none
 They can achieve, as here for thee they may.
 For thou art lord of an extensive plain,
 Where lotus, herbage of all savours, wheat,
 Pulse, and white barley clothe the fruitful soil.
 But Ithaca no level champaign owns,
 A nursery of goats, and yet a land
 Fairer than richest pastures in mine eye. • 730
 But none of all our rugged isles affords
 Large growth of herbs, or level space to run,
 And Ithaca the rudest is of all.

He said ; the hero Menelaus smil'd,
 And stroking tenderly his cheek, replied :
 Dear youth ! thy speech proclaims thy noble blood.

I can with ease supply thee from within
 With what shall suit thee better, and the gift
 Of all that I possess, which most excels
 In beauty, and the noblest shall be thine. 740
 I give thee, wrought elaborate, a cup
 Itself all silver, bound with lip of gold.
 It is the work of Vulcan, which to me
 The hero Phædimus presented, king
 Of the Sidonians, when on my return
 His house receiv'd me. That shall be thy own.

Thus they conferr'd; and now the busy train
 Of menials culinary, at the gate
 Of Menelaus, glorious chief, appear'd. 749
 They brought him sheep, with heart-ennobling wine,
 While all their wives, their brows with frontlets
 bound,
 Came charg'd with bread. Thus busy they prepar'd
 A banquet in the mansion of the king.

Mean time, before Ulysses' palace gate
 The suitors sported with the quoit and spear
 On the smooth area, customary scene
 Of all their strife and angry clamour loud.
 There sat Antinoüs, and the godlike youth
 Eurymachus, superiour to the rest
 And chiefs among them, to whom Phronius' son 760
 Noëmon drawing nigh, with anxious mien
 Question'd Antinoüs, and thus began:

Know we, Antinoüs! or know we not,
 When to expect Telemachus at home
 Again from Pylus? In my ship he went,
 Which now I need, that I may cross the sea
 To Elis, on whose spacious plain I feed
 Twelve mares, each suckling a mule-colt as yet
 Unbroken, but of which I purpose one
 To ferry thence, and break him into use. 770

He spake, whom they astonish'd heard; for him
 They deem'd not to Nelëian Pylus gone,
 But, likeliest, to the field, his num'rous flocks
 To visit, or the steward of his swine.
 Then thus, Eupithes' son, Antinoüs, spake:

Say true. When sail'd he forth? of all our youth,
 Whom chose he for his followers? his own train

Of slaves and hirelings? Hath he pow'r to effect
 This also? Tell me too, for I would learn—
 Took he perforce thy sable bark away, 780
 Or gav'st it to him at his first demand?

To whom Noëmon, Phronius' son, replied:
 I gave it voluntary; what couldst thou,
 Should such a prince petition for thy bark
 In such distress? Hard were it to refuse.
 A band inferiour to yourselves alone
 Attends him forth; and with them I observ'd
 Mentor embarking, ruler o'er them all,
 Or, if not him, a God; for such he seem'd.
 But this much moves my wonder. Yester-morn 790
 I saw, at day-break, noble Mentor here,
 Whom shipp'd for Pylus I had seen before.

He ceas'd; and to his father's house return'd;
 They, hearing, sat aghast. Their games mean time
 Finish'd, the suitors on their seats repos'd,
 To whom Eupithes' son, Antinoüs, next
 Much troubled spake; a black storm overcharg'd
 His bosom, and his vivid eyes flash'd fire:

Ye Gods! a proud exploit is here achiev'd,
 This voyage of Telemachus, by us 800
 Pronounc'd impracticable; yet the boy,
 In rash defiance of us all, is gone,
 With a swift bark, and with a chosen crew.
 He soon will prove more mischievous, whose pow'r
 Jove wither, ere we suffer its effects!
 But, be ye quick, launch also forth for me
 A bark with twenty rowers; close conceal'd
 Within the narrow frith that sep'rates these
 From the rough shores of Samos, will I lurk,
 And watch his coming, who shall dearly rue, 810
 That e'er he roam'd to seek his wand'ring sire.

He ceas'd, and loud applause heard in reply,
 With warm encouragement. Then, rising all,
 Into Ulysses' house at once they throng'd.
 Nor was Penelope left uninform'd
 Long time of their clandestine plottings deep;
 For herald Medon told her all, whose ear
 Their councils caught, while in the outer-court
 He stood, and they that project fram'd within.

Swift to Penelope the tale he bore. 820

Who, as he pass'd the gate, him thus address'd :

Why, herald ! thus in haste ? With what command
Charg'd by the suitors ? That Ulysses' maids
Their tasks resign, to furnish, at his cost,
The board for them ? Here end, for ever end
Their tedious wooing ! May ye never hence
Escape, t' assemble at the festive board
Elsewhere, as here assembling day by day
Ye have devour'd the substance of my son,
The prince Telemachus ! Ye never, sure, 830
When children, from your parents learn'd, how kind
Ulysses, in their days, had ever been,
No wrongs committing, criminating none
Before the people, as the practice is,
Of mighty chiefs, who favour without cause,
And without cause discount'nance whom they please.
He no man wrong'd at any time : but ye
Proclaim your own ingratitude, and prove
His kindness to your parents lost on you.

Then Medon answer thus, prudent, return'd : 840
Grant Heav'n, O queen, that this wo prove the worst !
But greater far and heavier ills than this
The suitors plan, whose counsels Jove confound !
Their base desire and purpose are to slay
Telemachus on his return ; for he,
To gather tidings of his sire, is gone
To Pylus, or to Sparta's land divine.

He said ; and where she stood her trembling knees
Fail'd under her, and all her spirits went.
Speechless she long remain'd, tears fill'd her eyes, 850
And inarticulate in its passage died
Her utt'rance, till at last with pain she spake :

Herald ! why went my son ? he hath no need
On board swift ships to ride, which are to man
His steeds, that bear him over seas remote.
Went he resolv'd on death, and that his name,
Sunk with himself, should be pronounc'd no more ?

Then answer, thus, Medon the wise return'd :
I know not whether him some God impell'd
Or his own heart to Pylus, there to hear 860
News of his sire's return, or by what fate

At least he died, if he return no more.

He said; and traversing Ulysses' courts,
Departed; she, with heart-consuming wo
O'erwhelm'd, no longer could endure to take
Repose on any of her num'rous seats,
But on the threshold of her chamber-door
Lamenting sat, while all her female train
Around her moan'd, the ancient and the young,
Whom, sobbing, thus, Penelope bespake: 870

Hear me, ye maidens! for of woman born
Coeval with me none hath e'er receiv'd
Such plenteous sorrow from the Gods as I,
Who first my noble husband lost, endu'd
With courage lionlike, of all the Greeks
The chief with ev'ry virtue most adorn'd,
A prince all-excellent, whose glorious praise
Through Hellas and all Argos flew diffus'd,
And now my darling son,—him storms have snatch'd
Far hence inglorious, and I knew it not. 880
Ah, treach'rous servants! conscious as ye were
Of his design, not one of you the thought
Conceiv'd to wake me when he went on board.
For had I known his purpose to depart,
He either had not gone (how much soe'er
He wish'd to leave me) or had left me dead.
But haste ye,—bid my ancient servant come,
Dolion (whom when I left my father's house
He gave me, and whose office is to attend
My num'rous garden plants) that he may seek 890
At once Laertes, and may tell him all;
He may, perchance, some remedy devise,
And, weeping, move the people to withstand
These cruel men, who purpose to destroy
My son, sole offspring of his godlike sire.

Then thus the gentle Euryclea spake,
Nurse of Telemachus: Alas! my queen!
Slay me, or spare, deal with me as thou wilt,
I will confess the truth. I knew it all.
I gave him all that he requir'd from me, 900
Both wine and bread, and, at his bidding, swore,
To tell thee naught in twelve whole days to come,
Or till, inquiry made, thou shouldst thyself

Learn his departure; lest thou shouldst impair
 Thy lovely features with excess of grief.
 But lave thyself, and, fresh attir'd, ascend
 To thy own chamber, there, with all thy train,
 To worship Pallas, who shall save, thenceforth,
 Thy son from death, what ills soe'er he meet.
 Add not fresh sorrows to the present woes 910
 Of the old king, for I believe not yet
 Arcesias' race rejected by the Gods
 Wholly, but trust that there shall still be found
 Among them, who shall, undisturb'd, possess
 This palace, with its distant fair domain.

So saying, she hush'd her sorrow, and her eyes
 No longer stream'd. Then, bath'd and fresh attir'd,
 Penelope ascended with her train
 The upper palace, and a basket stor'd
 With hallow'd cakes to Pallas off'ring, pray'd: 920

Hear, matchless daughter of Jove ægis-arm'd!
 If ever wise Ulysses offer'd here
 The thighs of fatted kine or sheep to thee,
 Now, mindful of his piety, preserve
 His darling son, and frustrate with a frown
 The cruelty of these imperious guests!

She said, and with shrill voice melodious pray'd,
 Whom Pallas heard. And now the spacious hall
 And gloomy passages with tumult rang
 And clamour of that throng; when thus, a youth 930
 Insolent as his fellows dar'd to speak:

Much woo'd, and long, the queen at length prepares
 To choose another mate, and nought suspects
 The bloody death, to which her son we doom.

So he; but of his doom they little knew,
 And cautious thus Antinoüs replied:

Sirs! one and all, I counsel you, beware
 Of such bold boasting unadvis'd; lest one,
 O'erhearing you, report your words within.
 No—rather thus, in silence, let us move 940
 To an exploit so pleasant to us all.

He said, and twenty chose, the bravest there,
 With whom he sought the galley on the shore,
 Which haling down to sea, with mast and sails
 They furnish'd, and, adjusting next their oars

Each to its groove with smoothest leather lin'd,
 Unfurl'd their shining canvass to the gale.
 Their bold attendants brought them then their arms,
 And thrusting forth the galley till she swam,
 They moor'd her fast, then went themselves on
 board, 950

And, supping, waited for the dusk of eve.

But when Penelope, the palace stairs
 Remounting, had her upper chamber reach'd,
 There, unrefresh'd with either food or wine,
 She laid her down, her noble son the theme
 Of all her musings, whether he should 'scape
 His impious foes, or perish by their hands.
 Num'rous as are the lion's thoughts, who sees,
 Not without fear, a multitude with toils
 Encircling him around, such num'rous thoughts 960
 Her bosom occupied, till, sleep at length
 Invading her, she sank in soft repose.

Then Pallas, teeming with a new design,
 Set forth an airy phantom in the form
 Of fair Iphthima, daughter of the brave
 Icarius, and Eumelus' wedded wife
 In Pheræ. Shap'd like her the dream she sent
 Into the mansion of the godlike chief,
 Ulysses, with kind purpose to abate
 The sighs and tears of sad Penelope. 970
 Ent'ring the chamber-portal where the bolt
 Secur'd it, at her head the image stood,
 And thus, in terms compassionate, began:

Sleep'st thou, distress'd Penelope? The Gods,
 Happy in everlasting rest themselves,
 Forbid thy sorrows. Thou shalt yet behold
 Thy son again, who hath by no offence
 Incurr'd at any time the wrath of Heav'n.

To whom, sweet-slumb'ring in the shadowy gate
 By which dreams pass, Penelope replied: 980

What cause, my sister, brings thee, who art seen
 Unfrequent here, for that thou dwell'st remote?
 And thou enjoin'st me a cessation too
 From sorrows num'rous, and which, fretting, wear
 My heart continual; first my spouse I lost
 With courage lionlike endow'd, a prince

All-excellent, whose never-dying praise
 Through Hellas and all Argos flew diffus'd;
 And now my only son, new to the toils
 And hazards of the sea, nor less untaught 990
 The arts of traffic, in a ship is gone
 Far hence, for whose dear cause I sorrow more
 Than for his sire himself, and even shake
 With terrour, lest he perish by their hands,
 To whom he goes, or in the stormy Deep;
 For num'rous are his foes, and all intent
 To slay him, ere he reach his home again.

Then answer thus the shadowy form return'd:
 Take courage; suffer not excessive dread
 To overwhelm thee, for secur'd he goes 1000
 By Pallas; a protectress such as all
 Would wish to gain; for harm can ne'er betide
 Whom she defends. In pity of thy woes
 She urg'd me forth, and charg'd me thus to speak.

Then thus Penelope the wise replied:
 O! if thou art a Goddess, and hast heard
 A Goddess' voice, rehearse to me the lot
 Of that unhappy one, if yet he live
 Spectator of the cheerful beams of day,
 Or if, already dead, he dwell below. 1010

Then answer thus the fading form return'd:
 Vain words are evil. Whether he be dead,
 Or still alive, rest uninform'd by me.

So saying, her egress swift beside the bolt
 She made, and melted into air. Upsprang
 From sleep Icarius' daughter, and her heart
 Felt heal'd within her, by that dream impress'd
 Distinctly in the noiseless night serene.

Mean time the suitors urg'd their wat'ry way,
 To instant death devoting in their hearts 1020
 Telemachus. There is a rocky isle
 In the mid sea, Samos the rude between
 And Ithaca, not large, nam'd Asteris,
 It hath commodious havens, into which
 A passage clear opens on either side,
 And there the ambush'd Greeks his coming watch'd.

BOOK V.

Argument.

Mercury bears to Calypso a command from Jupiter, that she dismiss Ulysses. She, after some remonstrances,² promises obedience, and furnishes him with implements and materials, with which he constructs a raft. He quits Calypso's island; is persecuted by Neptune with dreadful tempests; but by the assistance of a sea nymph, after having lost his raft, is enabled to swim to Phæacia.

AURORA from beside her glorious mate
Tithonus now arose, dispensing light
Through Earth and Heav'n, when the assembled Gods
In council sat, o'er whom high-thund'ring Jove
Presided, mightiest of the Pow'rs above.
Amid them Pallas all Ulysses' woes
Enumerated, whom with grief she saw
Detain'd still pris'ner in Calypo's isle.

Jove, and ye blest inhabitants of Heav'n!
Be never king, hereafter, lib'ral, kind, 10
Or righteous, but let ev'ry sceptred hand
Rule merciless, and deal in wrong alone,
Since none of all his people, whom he sway'd
With such paternal gentleness and love,
Remembers now divine Ulysses more.
He in yon distant isle a suff'rer lies
Of hopeless sorrow, through constraint the guest
Still of the nymph Calypso, without means
Or pow'r to reach his native shores again,
Alike of gallant barks and friends depriv'd, 20
Who might conduct him o'er the spacious Deep.
Nor this is all, but enemies combine,
To slay his son ere yet he can return
From Pylus, whither he hath gone to learn
There, or in Sparta, tidings of his sire.

To whom the sov'reign of the skies replied :
 What words are these, which now have pass'd thy lips,
 My daughter? Hast thou not, thyself, decreed
 A safe return and vengeance on his foes
 To brave Ulysses? Thou hast also skill 30
 To guide uninjur'd to his native home
 Telemachus his son, and canst with ease
 Send back the suitors vex'd at his escape.

He ceas'd, and thus to Hermes spake, his son :
 Hermes ! (for thou art herald of our will
 At all times) to yon beauteous nymph convey
 Our fix'd resolve, that brave Ulysses thence
 Depart, unaccompanied by God or man.
 Borne on a corded raft, and suff'ring wo
 Extreme, he on the twentieth day shall reach, 40
 Not sooner, Scherie the deep-soil'd, possess'd
 By the Phæacians, kinsmen of the Gods.
 They as a God shall reverence the chief,
 And in a bark of theirs shall send him thence
 To his own home, much treasure, brass and gold,
 And raiment giving him, to an amount
 Surpassing all that, had he safe return'd,
 He should by lot have shar'd of Ilium's spoil.
 Thus Fate appoints Ulysses to regain
 His native shore, his palace, and his friends. 50

He ended, nor the Argicide refus'd
 Messenger of the skies ; his sandals fair,
 Ambrosial, golden, to his feet he bound,
 Which o'er the moist wave, rapid as the wind,
 Bear him, and o'er th' illimitable Earth ;
 Then took his rod, with which, at will, all eyes
 He softly shuts, or opens them again.
 So arm'd, forth flew the valiant Argicide.
 Alighting on Pieria, down he stoop'd
 To Ocean, and the billows lightly skimm'd 60
 In form a seamew, such as, in the bays
 Tremendous of the barren Deep her food
 Seeking, dips oft in brine her ample wing.
 In such disguise o'er many a wave he rode,
 But reaching now that isle remote, forsook
 The azure Deep ; and, at the spacious grot,
 Where dwelt the amber-tress'd nymph, arriv'd,

Found her within. A fire on all the hearth
 Blaz'd sprightly, and, afar-diffus'd, the scent
 Of smooth-split cedar and of cypress-wood
 Odorous, burning, cheer'd the happy isle.
 She, busied at the loom, and plying fast
 Her golden shuttle, with melodious voice
 Sat chanting there; a grove on either side,
 Alder and poplar, and the redolent branch
 Of cypress hemm'd the dark retreat around.
 There many a bird of broadest pinion built
 Secure her nest, the owl, the kite, and daw,
 Long-tongu'd, frequenter of the Sandy shores.

70

A garden-vine luxuriant on all sides
 Mantled the spacious cavern, cluster-hung
 Profuse; four fountains of serenest lymph
 Their sinuous course pursuing side by side,
 Stray'd all around, and ev'ry where appear'd
 Meadows of softest verdure, purpled o'er
 With violets; it was a scene to fill

80

A God from Heav'n with wonder and delight.
 Hermes, Heav'n's messenger, admiring stood
 That sight, and having all survey'd, at length
 Enter'd the grotto; nor the lovely nymph
 Him knew not soon as seen, for not unknown
 Each to the other the Immortals are,
 How far soever sep'rate their abodes.

90

Yet found he not within the mighty chief,
 Ulysses; he sat weeping on the shore,
 Forlorn; for there his custom was with groans
 Of sad regret t' afflict his breaking heart,
 Looking continual o'er the barren Deep.

Then thus Calypso, loveliest nymph divine,
 Of Hermes, from her dazzling throne, inquir'd: 100

Hermes, swift bearer of the golden rod!
 Whom I respect and love, thou art a guest
 Unfrequent here—say, wherefore hast thou come?
 Speak thy desire; I grant it, if thou ask
 Things possible, and possible to me.
 Stay not, but ent'ring farther, at my board
 Due rites of hospitality receive.

So saying, the Goddess with ambrosial food
 Her table cover'd, and with rosy juice

Nectareous charg'd the cup. Then ate and drank
The Argicide and herald of the skies, 111
And when, divinely banquetted, he felt
His heart refresh'd, his message thus declar'd:

Questionest thou, a Goddess, me a God?
I tell thee truth, since such is thy demand.
Not willing, but by Jove constrain'd, I come.
For who would, voluntary, such a breadth
Enormous measure of the salt expanse,
Where city none is seen, in which the Gods
Are serv'd with chosen hecatombs and pray'r? 120
But no divinity may the designs
Elude, or controvert, of Jove supreme.
He saith, that here thou hold'st the most distress
Of all those warriors, who nine years assail'd
The city of Priam, and (that city sack'd)
Departed in the tenth; but, going thence
Offended Pallas, who with adverse winds
Oppos'd their voyage, and with boist'rous waves.
Then perish'd all his gallant friends, but him
Billows and storms drove hither; Jove commands
That thou dismiss him hence without delay, 131
For fate ordains him not to perish here
From all his friends remote, but he is doom'd
To see them yet again, and to arrive
At his own palace in his native land.

He said; divine Calypso at the sound
Shudder'd, and in wing'd accents thus replied:

Ye are unjust, ye Gods, and envious past
All others, grudging if a Goddess choose
A mortal husband, and avow the choice. 140
So, when the rosy-palm'd Aurora chose
Orion, even in your blest abodes
Ye rested not, till, in Ortygia, pierc'd
By fair Diana's gentle shafts he died.
So when the beauteous Ceres, in a deep
Thrice-labour'd fallow, sway'd by soft desire,
Infolded young Iasion in her arms,
Not long remain'd Jove ignorant, who smote
With his bright bolt and slew the favour'd swain.
So also, O ye Gods, ye envy me 150
The mortal man, my consort. Him I sav'd

Myself, while solitary on his keel
 He rode, for with his sulph'rous arrow Jove
 Had cleft his bark amid the sable Deep.
 Then perish'd all his gallant friends, but him
 Billows and storms drove hither, whom I lov'd
 Sincere, and fondly destin'd to a life
 Immortal, unobnoxious to decay.
 But since no Deity may the designs
 Elude or controvert of Jove supreme, 160
 Hence with him to a death abhorr'd, if such
 The Sov'reign's will, and such his stern command.
 But undimiss'd he goes by me, who ships
 Myself well-oar'd and mariners have none,
 To send with him athwart the spacious flood;
 Yet will I counsel him, nor shall he want
 Such means of furth'rance to his native isle,
 As my best help can furnish for his use.

Then Hermes thus, the messenger of Heav'n:
 So send him hence, and quickly, through respect 170
 For the command of Jove; whose fiery wrath,
 If thou delay, thou mayst, thyself, incur.

So saying, the dauntless Argicide withdrew,
 And she (Jove's mandate heard) all-graceful went,
 Seeking the brave Ulysses; on the shore
 She found him seated; tears that never ceas'd
 His cheek bedew'd, and since the lovely nymph
 Had lost her pow'r to charm him, he resign'd
 All thought of bliss besides, and in the pangs
 Of hopeless exile pass'd his happiest hours; 180
 Yet, through constraint, and listless to return
 Her fond embraces, in her arch'd recess
 He slept the night beside her, and, by day,
 Reclining on the rocks that lin'd the shore,
 And viewing wistfully the barren Deep,
 Wept, groan'd, desponded, sigh'd, and wept again.
 Then, drawing near, thus spake the nymph divine:

Unhappy! weep not here, nor life consume
 In anguish; go, thou hast my glad consent.
 Arise, and hewing from the trunks of trees 190
 Long planks, with bolts of iron form a raft
 Of needful breadth, which, closely floor'd above,
 Shall hence convey thee o'er the gloomy Deep.

Bread, water, and the red grape's cheering juice,
 Myself will put on board, which shall preserve
 Thy life from famine; I will also give
 New raiment for thy limbs, and will dispatch
 Winds after thee to waft thee home unharm'd,
 If such the pleasure of the Gods who dwell
 In yonder boundless Heav'n, to whom belongs 200
 Unerring skill to judge, and not to me.

She spake; Ulysses shudder'd at the sound,
 And thus th' afflicted hero quick replied:

Ah! other thoughts than of my safe return
 Employ thee, Goddess, now, who bidd'st me pass
 The perilous gulf of Ocean on a raft,
 That wild expanse, which even gallant ships
 Pass not, though form'd to cleave their way with ease,
 And joyful in propitious winds from Jove,
 No—let me never, in despite of thee, 210
 Embark, on board a raft, nor till thou swear,
 O Goddess! the inviolable oath,
 That future mischief thou intend'st me none.

He said; Calypso, beauteous Goddess, strok'd
 His wan, wet cheek, and, smiling, thus replied:

Thou dost asperse me rudely, and excuse
 Of ignorance hast none, far better taught.
 What words were these? How couldst thou thus
 reply?

Now hear me Earth, and the wide Heav'n above!
 Hear, too, ye waters of the Stygian stream 220
 Under the Earth, (by which the blessed Gods
 Swear trembling, and revere the awful oath!)
 That future mischief I intend thee none.
 No, my designs concerning thee are such
 As, in an exigence resembling thine,
 Myself, most sure, should for myself conceive.
 I have a mind more equal, not of steel
 My heart is form'd, but much to pity inclin'd.

So saying, the lovely Goddess with swift pace
 Led on, whose footsteps he as swift pursu'd. 230
 Within the vaulted cavern they arriv'd,
 The Goddess and the man; on the same throne
 Ulysses sat, whence Hermes had aris'n,
 Where all refreshments, such as mortals use,

Calpyso plac'd before him, drink and meats
Of various kinds, then, opposite repos'd,
Was serv'd, herself, by her attendant train
With nectar and ambrosia. They their hands
Stretch'd forth together to the ready feast,
And when nor hunger more nor thirst remain'd 240
Unsated, thus the beauteous nymph began:

Laertes' godlike son, for wiles renown'd!
Canst thou resolve thus suddenly to seek
Thy native shores?—I wish thee, not the less,
All joy—but knew'st thou to what num'rous woes
Thy fate ordains thee, in thy voyage hence,
This calm retirement and immortal life,
Enjoy'd with me, would win thee to remain,
Ardent and ceaseless as thy wishes are
To see Penelope; for, whether face 250
Or form engage thee, well may I presume
Mine scarce inferiour, since immortal charms,
Compar'd with mortal merely, must excel.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied:
Dread Goddess! bear with me. Myself, I know,
That my Penelope alike in form
And stature altogether yields to thee,
For she is mortal, and immortal thou,
From age exempt; yet not the less I wish
My native home, and languish till the day, 260
That sees my safe arrival, shall arise.
But should some God amid the sable Deep
Dash me again into a wreck, my soul
Shall never, ev'n for such a cause renounce
Her wonted fortitude; for I have borne
In storms and battle much; now, therefore, come
This evil also, following all the rest!

He ended, and the sinking sun resign'd
The Earth to darkness. Then in a recess
Interiour of the cavern, side by side 270
Repos'd, they took their amorous delight.
But when Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
Look'd rosy forth, Ulysses then in haste
Put on his vest and mantle, and the nymph
Her snowy vesture of transparent woof,
Graceful, redundant; to her waist she bound

Her golden zone, and veil'd her beauteous head,
 Then, musing, plann'd the noble chief's return.
 She gave him, fitted to the grasp, an axe
 Of iron, pond'rous, double-edg'd, with haft 280
 Of olive wood, inserted firm, and wrought
 With curious art. Then, placing in his hand
 A polish'd adze, she led, herself, the way
 To her isle's utmost verge, where loftiest stood
 The alder, poplar, and cloud-piercing fir,
 Though sapless, sound, and fittest for his use,
 As buoyant most. To that once verdant grove
 His steps the beauteous Nymph Calypso led,
 And sought her home again. Then slept not he,
 But, swinging with both hands the axe, his task 290
 Soon finish'd; trees full twenty to the ground
 He cast, which dext'rous with his adze he smooth'd,
 The knotted surface chipping by a line.
 Mean time the lovely Goddess to his aid
 Sharp augers brought, with which he bor'd the beams,
 Then plac'd them side by side, adapting each
 To other, and the seams with wadding clos'd.
 Broad as an artist, skill'd in naval works,
 The bottom of a ship of burden spreads,
 Such breadth Ulysses to his raft assign'd. 300
 He deck'd her over with long planks, upborn
 On massy beams; he made the mast, to which
 He added suitable the yard;—he fram'd
 Rudder and helm to regulate her course,
 With wicker-work he border'd all her length
 For safety, and much ballast stow'd within,
 Mean time Calypso brought him for a sail
 Fittest materials, which he also shap'd,
 And to his sail due furniture annex'd
 Of cordage strong, foot ropes, and ropes aloft, 310
 Then heav'd her down with levers to the Deep.
 He finish'd all his work on the fourth day;
 And on the fifth, Calypso, nymph divine,
 Dismiss'd him from her isle, but lav'd him first,
 And cloth'd him in sweet-scented garments new.
 Two skins the Goddess also plac'd on board,
 One charg'd with crimson wine, and ampler one
 With water; nor a bag with food replete

Forgot, nutritious grateful to the taste ;
 Nor yet, her latest gift, a gentle gale 320
 And manageable, which Ulysses spread,
 Exulting, all his canvass to receive.
 Beside the helm he sat, steering expert,
 Nor sleep fell ever on his eyes, that watch'd
 Intent the Pleiads, tardy in decline
 Bootes, and the Bear, call'd else the Wain,
 Which, in his polar prison circling, looks
 Direct toward Orion, and alone
 Of these sinks never to the briny Deep.
 That star the lovely Goddess bade him hold 330
 Continual on his left through all his course.
 Ten days and sev'n he navigating cleav'd
 The brine, and on the eighteenth day at length
 The shadowy mountains of Phæacia's land
 Descried, where nearest to his course it lay
 Like a broad buckler on the waves afloat.

But Neptune, traversing, in his return
 From Æthiopia's sons, the mountain-heights
 Of Solymè, descried him from afar
 Borne on the smooth expanse. His fiery wrath 340
 Redoubling at the sight, his brows he shook,
 And thus within himself indignant spake :

So then—while I with Æthiopia's sons
 Have dwelt secure, Ulysses, as it seems,
 Hath found the Gods less adverse. He beholds
 Phæacia nigh, where he is doom'd to leap
 The bound'ry of his woes ; yet such distress
 As I can cause, he shall not want the while.

He spake, and grasping his huge trident, call'd
 Storms from all quarters, cov'ring Earth and Sea 350
 With blackest clouds, and night rush'd down from
 Heav'n.

The East, the South, the heavy-blowing West,
 And the cold North-wind clear, assail'd at once
 The raft, and heav'd on high the billowy flood.
 All hope, all courage, in that moment, lost,
 The hero thus within himself complain'd :

Wretch that I am, what destiny at last
 Attends me ! much I fear the Goddess' words
 All true, which threaten'd me with num'rous ills

On the wide sea, ere I should reach my home. 360
Behold them all fulfill'd ! with what a storm
Jove hangs the Heav'ns, and agitates the Deep !
Swift comes the tempest on ; the gather'd winds
All rage at once, and there is no escape.

Thrice blest, and more than thrice, Achaia's sons
At Ilium slain for the Atridæ' sake !
O that contending with the Trojan host
For slain Achilles, when a thousand spears
Assail'd me, I had died ! Achaia's sons
Had then, with sounding shields, and solemn march,
And strains funereal compass'd me around, 371
Whom ruthless Fate now dooms to perish here.

A billow, at that word, with dreadful sweep
Roll'd o'er his head, and whirl'd the raft around.
Dash'd from the steerage o'er the vessel's side,
He plung'd remote ; the gust of mingling winds
Snapp'd short the mast, and sail and sail-yard bore
Afar into the Deep. Long time beneath
The whelming waves he lay, nor could emerge
With sudden force, for furious was the shock, 380
And his apparel, fair Calypso's gift,
Oppress'd him sorely ; but at length he rose,
And, rising, spatter'd from his lips the brine,
Which trickling left his brows in many a stream.
Nor, though distress'd, unmindful to regain
His raft was he, but, buffeting the waves,
Pursu'd, and, well nigh at his dying gasp,
Recover'd it, and in the centre sat.

She, by the billows toss'd, at random roll'd.
As when, in autumn, Boreas o'er the plain 390
Before him drives a mass of matted thorns,
They, tangled, to each other close adhere,
So her the winds drove wild about the Deep.
By turns, the South consign'd her, as in sport,
To the rude North-wind, and the West, by turns,
Receiv'd her from the intermitting East.
Him Cadmus' daughter, Ino nam'd of old,
But now Leucothea, saw. She, lovely Nymph,
Once mortal trod the ground, but in the gulfs
Of Ocean shares immortal honours now. 400
Her pity tempest-toss'd and worn with toil

Ulysses mov'd, and in a seamew's form
Emerging, with broad wing she skimm'd the waves,
And perching on the raft, him thus address'd :

Alas ! unhappy ! how hast thou incens'd
So terribly the Shaker of the shores,
That he pursues thee with such num'rous ills ?
Sink thee he cannot, wish it as he may.

Thus do (for I account thee not unwise) :
Thy garments putting off, let drive thy raft 410
As the winds will ; then, swimming, strive to reach
Phæacia, where thy doom is to escape.
Take this. This riband bind beneath thy breast,
Celestial texture. Thenceforth ev'ry fear
Of death dismiss, and, laying once thy hands
On the firm continent, unbind the zone,
Which thou shalt cast far distant from the shore
Into the Deep ; but turn thy face away.

So saying, the Goddess gave into his hand
The wondrous zone, and, seamew still in form 420
Plung'd from his sight beneath the rolling flood.
But still the afflicted hero sat perplex'd,
And with his noble heart thus commun'd sad :

Alas ! this counsel to forsake the raft—
I fear it—lest some Deity design
Another snare for me ; nor shall I yield
Obedience soon ; for I beheld the land
Of my foretold deliv'ranee far remote.
Thus, therefore, will I do, for such appears
My wiser course. While yet the planks sustain 430
This tempest undisjoin'd, I will abide
A suff'rer on the raft ; but when the waves
Shall once have shatter'd it, I will essay
This girdle then—my sole expedient left.
While thus he mus'd, the God of Ocean heav'd
A mountainous and overwhelming wave,
And hurl'd it at the raft. As when the wind
Tempestuous falling on some stubble-heap,
The arid straws disperses ev'ry way,
So flew the timbers. He, a single beam 440
Bestriding, oar'd it onward with his feet,
As he had urg'd a horse. Then putting off
Calypso's gift, his drench'd attire, he bound

His girdle on, and prone into the sea,
 With wide-spread palms prepar'd for swimming, fell.
 The God of Ocean ey'd him; in disdain
 He shook his brows, and in his heart he said:

Thus, suff'ring many mis'ries, roam the flood,
 Till thou shalt mingle with a race of men
 Heav'n's special favourites; yet even there 450
 Fear not that thou shalt feel thy sorrows light.

He said, and scourging his bright steeds, arriv'd
 At Ægæ, where his glorious palace stands.

But other thoughts Minerva's mind employ'd,
 Jove's daughter; binding ev'ry wind beside,
 She lull'd them, and enjoin'd them all to sleep,
 But rous'd swift Boreas, and the billows bade
 Subside before him, till the noble chief,
 From death deliver'd and the grasp of fate,
 Should mingle with Phæacia's sons secure. 460

Two nights of terrour, and two dreadful days
 Bewilder'd in the Deep, and many a time
 Foreboding death, he roam'd; but when, at length,
 The third bright morn appear'd, the wind, assuag'd,
 Blew softly, and a breathless calm ensu'd.
 Then, casting from a billow's height a look
 Of anxious heed, he saw Phæacia nigh.

Precious as to his children seems the life
 Of some fond father, who hath long endur'd
 His adverse demon's rage, by slow disease 470
 And ceaseless anguish wasted, till the Gods
 Dispel at length their fears, and he revives,
 So grateful to Ulysses' sight appear'd
 Forests and hills. Impatient with his feet
 To press the shore, he swam; but when within
 Such distance as a shout may reach, he came,
 The thunder of the sea against the rocks
 Then smote his ear; for hoarse the billows roar'd
 On the firm land, belch'd horrible abroad,
 And the salt spray dimm'd all things to his view. 480
 For neither port for ships nor shelf'ring cove
 Was there, but the rude coast a headland bluff
 Presented, rocks and craggy masses huge.
 All hope and strength than failing him, he heav'd
 A deep long groan, and in his heart he said—

Alas ! though Jove hath giv'n me to behold,
Unhop'd, the land again, and I have pass'd,
Furrowing my way, these num'rous waves, there
seems

No egress from the hoary flood for me.
Sharp stones hem in the waters ; wild the surge 490
Raves ev'ry where ; and smooth the rocks arise ;
Deep also is the shore, on which my feet
No standing gain, or chance of safe escape.
What if some billow catch me from the Deep
Emerging, and against the pointed rocks
Dash me conflicting with its force in vain ?
But should I, swimming, trace the coast in search
Of sloping beach, haven, or shelter'd creek,
I fear lest, groaning, I be snatch'd again
By stormy gusts into the fishy Deep, 500
Or lest some monster of the flood receive
Command to seize me, of the many such
By the illustrious Amphitrite bred ;
For that the mighty Shaker of the shores
Hates me implacable, too well I know.

While such discourse within himself he held,
A huge wave heav'd him on the rugged coast,
Where flay'd his flesh had been, and all his bones
Broken together, but for the infus'd
Good counsel of Minerva azure-ey'd. 510
With both hands suddenly he seiz'd the rock,
And, groaning, clench'd it till the billow pass'd.
So baffled he that wave ; but yet again
The reflux flood rush'd on him, and with force
Resistless dash'd him far into the sea.
As when the polypus, enforc'd, forsakes
His rough recess, in his contracted claws
He gripes the pebbles still, to which he clung,
So he, within his lacerated grasp
The crumbled stone retain'd, when from his hold 520
The huge wave forc'd him, and he sank again.
Then had not fate herself prevail'd to save
Hapless Ulysses, but that he pursu'd,
Admonish'd by the Goddess most his friend,
A course more prudent. From the foamy flood
Emerging, where the billows dash'd the shore,

He swam behind them, with a landward look
 For some safe shelter open'd by the waves.
 But when, still swimming, to the mouth he came
 Of a smooth-sliding river, there he deem'd 530
 Safest th' ascent, for it was undeform'd
 By rocks, and shelter'd close from ev'ry wind.
 He felt the current, and thus, ardent, pray'd:

O king! whate'er thy name, whose welcome course
 Escaping Neptune's menaces, I reach,
 Propitious hear my pray'r! the Gods themselves
 Respect the fugitive forlorn as I,
 Who now, long time a suff'rer, first behold
 Thy gentle stream, and seek thy gracious aid.
 O hear thy suppliant! Pity my distress! 540

He said; the river God at once repress'd
 His current, and it ceas'd; then smooth he made
 The way before Ulysses, and the land
 Vouchsaf'd him easy at his channel's mouth.
 There, once again he bent for ease his limbs
 Both arms and knees, in conflict with the floods
 Exhausted; swoln his body was all o'er,
 And from his mouth and nostrils stream'd the brine.
 Breathless and speechless, and of life well-nigh
 Bereft he lay, through dreadful toil immense. 550
 But when, reviv'd, his dissipated pow'rs
 He recollected, loosing from beneath
 His breast the zone divine, he cast it far
 Into the brackish stream, and a huge wave
 Returning bore it downward to the sea,
 Where Ino caught it. Then, the river's brink
 Abandoning, among the rushes prone
 He lay, kiss'd oft the soil, and, sighing, said:

Ah me! what suff'rings must I now sustain?
 What doom, at last, awaits me? Should I watch 560
 The long sad night beside the river's brink,
 I fear lest, spiritless and overtoil'd,
 I perish by the frost and chilling dews,
 For cold o'er water comes the morning air.
 But should I reach yon dusky woods, that crown
 These sloping hills, and make my couch beneath
 Their thickest boughs, if even there, at ease,
 Reposing and from cold secure, I yield

To sleep's soft influence, may I not be torn
By some voracious prowler of the wild? 570

Long time he mus'd, but, at the last, his course
Bent to the woods, which near the river side
He saw, encompass'd by an open lawn.
Arriv'd, between two neighbour shrubs he crept,
Both olives, this the fruitful, that the wild;
A covert, which nor rough winds blowing moist
Could penetrate, nor could the noon-day sun
Smite through it, or unceasing show'rs pervade,
So thick a roof the ample branches form'd
Close interwoven; under these the chief 580
Retiring, with industrious hands amass'd
An ample couch, for fallen leaves he found
Abundant there, such store as had suffic'd
Two travellers or three for cov'ring warm,
Though winter's roughest blasts had rag'd the while.
That bed with joy the suff'ring chief renown'd
Contemplated, and occupying soon
The middle space, heap'd higher still the leaves.
As when some swain hath hidden deep his torch
Beneath the embers, at the verge extreme 590
Of all his farm, where, having neighbours none,
He saves a seed or two of future flame
Alive, doom'd else to fetch it from afar,
So with dry leaves Ulysses overspread
His body, on whose eyes Minerva pour'd
The balm of sleep, and eager to restore
His wasted strength, soon clos'd their weary lids.

BOOK VI.

Argument.

Minerva, designing an interview between the daughter of Alcinous and Ulysses, admonishes her in a dream to carry down her clothes to the river, that she may wash them, and make them ready for her approaching nuptials. That task performed, the princess and her train amuse themselves with play; by accident they awake Ulysses; he comes forth from the wood, and applies himself with much address to Nausicaa, who compassionating his distressed condition, and being much affected by the dignity of his appearance, interests herself in his favour, and conducts him to the city.

WHILE thus by sleep and weariness subdu'd
The brave Ulysses lay, Minerva sought
The city of Phæacia. In old time
Phæacia's sons possess'd the fruitful plains
Of Hypereia, bord'ring on the fierce
Cyclopean race, from whose superiour might
They suffer'd num'rous wrongs. At length arose
Godlike Nausithoüs; he, their leader thence,
In Scheria plac'd them, an unneighbour'd isle,
And far from all resort of busy man. 10
He circled round their city with a wall;
Their houses, and the temples of the Gods,
He built, and made division of the soil.
But, victim of his fate, in Hades dwelt
Nausithoüs now, and, in his stead, endu'd
With wisdom by the Gods, Alcinoüs reign'd.
To his abode Minerva azure-ey'd
Repair'd, neglecting nought which might advance
Magnanimous Ulysses' safe return.
She sought the sumptuous chamber where, in form
And feature perfect as the Gods, the young 21

Nausicaa, daughter of the king, repos'd.
Fast by the pillars of the portal lay
Two damsels, one on either side, adorn'd
By all the Graces, and the doors were shut.
Soft as a breathing air, she stole toward
The virgin's couch, and standing at her head
In form of her companion dearly lov'd
The daughter of a mariner renown'd
For skill and courage, Dymas, thus began : 30

Nausicaa ! wherefore hath thy mother borne
A child so negligent ? Thy garments share,
Thy most magnificent, no thought of thine.
Yet thou must marry soon, and must provide
Robes for thyself, and for thy nuptial train.
Thy fame, on these concerns, and honour stand ;
These manag'd well, thy parents shall rejoice.
The dawn appearing, let us to the place
Of washing, where thy work-mate I will be
For speedier riddance of thy task, since soon 40
The days of thy virginity shall end ;
For thou art woo'd already by the prime
Of all Phæacia, country of thy birth.
Come then—solicit at the dawn of day
Thy royal father, that he send thee forth
With mules and carriage for conveyance hence
Of thy best robes, thy mantles and thy zones.
Thus, more commodiously thou shalt perform
The journey, for the cisterns lie remote.

So saying, the Goddess ceas'd, and sought at once
Olympus, by repute th' eternal seat 51
Of the ethereal Pow'rs, which never storms
Disturb, rains drench, or snow invade, but calm
The expanse, and cloudless shines with purest day.
There the inhabitants divine rejoice
For ever, and, the damsel thus advis'd,
Thither the blue-ey'd Deity repair'd.

Now came bright-charioted Aurora forth
And waken'd fair Nausicaa ; she her dream
Remember'd wond'ring, and her parents sought 60
Anxious to tell them. Them she found within.
Beside the hearth her royal mother sat,
Spinning soft fleeces with sea-purple dy'd

Among her menial maidens ; but she met
Her father, whom the nobles of the land
Had summon'd, issuing abroad to join
The illustrious chiefs in council. At his side
She stood, and thus her filial suit preferr'd :

Sir ! wilt thou lend me of the royal wains
A sumpter-carriage ? for our costly robes, 70
All sullied now, the cleansing stream require :
And thine, especially, when thou appear'st
In council with the princes of the land,
Had need be pure. Thy sons are also five,
Two wedded, and the rest of age to wed,
Who go not to the dance unless adorn'd
With fresh attire—all which is my concern.

So spake Nausicaa ; for she dar'd not name
Her own glad nuptials to her father's ear,
Who, conscious yet of all her drift, replied : 80

I grudge thee neither mules, my child, nor aught
That thou canst ask beside. Go, and my train
Shall furnish there a sumpter-carriage forth
High-built, strong-wheel'd, and of capacious size.

So saying, he issu'd his command, whom quick
His grooms obey'd. They in the court prepar'd
The sumpter-carriage, and adjoin'd the mules.
And now the virgin from her chamber, charg'd
With raiment, came, which on the car she plac'd,
And in the carriage-chest, mean time, the queen, 90
Her mother, viands of all flavours heap'd,
And fill'd a goat-skin with delicious wine.

This done, the damsel mounted, but receiv'd,
For unction of herself and of her maids,
From the queen's hand a golden cruise of oil,
Ere yet she went. Then, seizing on the scourge
And on the splendid reins, she lash'd the mules.

They, straining, stamp'd the soil, hard task'd to draw
Princess and raiment both ; nor sole she went,
But others also, maidens of her train 100

At the delightful rivulet arriv'd,
Where those perennial cisterns were prepar'd
With purest crystal of the fountain fed
Profuse, sufficient for the deepest stains,
Loosing the mules, they drove them forth to browse

On the sweet herb beside the dimpled flood.
 Light'ning the carriage, next, they bore in hand
 The garments down to the unsullied wave,
 And thrust them heap'd into the pools, their task
 Dispatching brisk, and with an emulous haste. 110
 When all were purified, and neither spot
 Could be perceiv'd nor blemish more, they spread
 The raiment orderly along the beach,
 Where dashing tides had cleans'd the pebbles most,
 And laving, next, and smoothing o'er with oil
 Their limbs, all seated on the river's bank,
 They took repast, while stretch'd the garments lay
 In noon-day fervour of the sun, to dry.
 Their hunger satisfied, at once arose
 The mistress and her train, and putting off 120
 Their head attire, play'd wanton with the ball,
 The princess singing to her maids the while.
 As shaft-arm'd Dian o'er the mountains moves,
 Taygetus or Erymanth sublime,
 The wild boar chasing or the tim'rous deer,
 The rural nymphs, Jove's daughters, the delight
 Share also, and Latona's bosom swells
 With secret joy; for though the Nymphs be fair,
 In Dian's fairer form and statelier mien
 The Goddess shines, apparent from afar, 130
 So all her train she, virgin pure, excell'd.

But when the hour of her departure thence
 Approach'd (the mules now yok'd again, and all
 Her elegant apparel folded neat)
 Then Pallas means devis'd from sleep to rouse
 Ulysses, and to show him, ere she went,
 His future fair conductress to the town.
 The princess cast the ball; but missing her,
 At whom she cast it, plung'd it in the flood.
 Loud shriek'd the damsels. Startled at the sound 140
 Ulysses sat erect, and thus he mus'd:

Ah me! what mortal race inhabit here?
 Rude are they, contumacious, and unjust?
 Or hospitable, and who fear the Gods?
 How piercing was that cry! the voice it seem'd
 Of nymphs who wanton on aerial heights,
 Beside clear fountains, or in grassy vales.

Is this a neighbourhood of men endu'd
With voice articulate? But what avails
Self-questioning? I will go forth and see. 150

So saying, divine Ulysses from beneath
His thicket crept, and from the leafy wood
A spreading branch pluck'd forcibly, design'd
A decent screen effectual, held before.

Like a huge mountain-lion forth he went,
Whom winds have vex'd, and rains; fire fills his eyes,
And whether herds, or flocks, or woodland deer
He find, he rends them, and, adust for blood,
Abstains not even from the guarded fold.

Such sure to seem in virgin eyes, the chief, 160
All naked as he was, his covert left,
Reluctant, by necessity constrain'd.

To them, with weeds and briny foam defil'd,
All terrible he seem'd, and to the land's
Remotest points dispers'd at once they flew.

Nausicaa alone fled not: for her
Pallas courageous made, and from her limbs,
By pow'r divine, all tremour took away.

Firm she expected him; he doubtful stood
Or to implore the lovely maid, her knees 170
Embracing, or, at distance due, to ask
In suppliant terms apparel, and the boon
Of guidance to the city where she dwelt.

Him so deliberating, most, at length,
This counsel pleas'd; in suppliant terms aloof
To sue to her, lest if he clasp'd her knees,
The virgin should that bolder course resent.
Then gentle thus and well advis'd he spake:

O queen! thy earnest suppliant I approach.
Art thou some Goddess, or of mortal race? 180

For if some Goddess, and from Heav'n arriv'd,
Then, Dian, daughter of all-pow'rful Jove,
I deem thee most, for such as hers appear

Thy form, thy stature, and thy air divine.
But if, of mortal race, thou dwell below,
Thrice happy then thy parents I account,
And happy thrice thy brethren. Ah! the joy
Which always, for thy sake, their bosoms fills,
When thee they view, all lovely as thou art,

Ent'ring majestic on the graceful dance. 190
But him beyond all others blest I deem,
The youth, who, wealthier than his rich compeers,
Shall win and lead thee to his honour'd home.
For never with these eyes a mortal form
Beheld I comparable aught to thine,
In man or woman. Wonder-rapt I gaze.
Such erst, in Delos, I beheld a palm
Beside the altar of Apollo, tall,
And growing still (for thither too I sail'd,
And num'rous were my followers in a voyage 200
Ordain'd my ruin); and as then I view'd
That palm long time amaz'd, for never grew
So straight a shaft, so lovely from the ground,
So, princess! thee with wonder I behold,
Charm'd into fix'd astonishment, by awe
Alone forbidden to embrace thy knees,
For I am one on whom much wo hath fall'n.
Yesterday I escap'd (the twentieth day
Of my distress by sea) the dreary Deep;
For all those days the waves and rapid storms 210
Bore me along, impetuous, from the isle
Ogygia; till at length the will of Heav'n
Cast me, that I might also here sustain
Affliction, on your shore; for rest, I think,
Is not for me. No. The immortal Gods
Have much to accomplish ere that day arrive.
But, O queen, pity me! who, after long
Calamities endur'd, of all who live
Thee first approach, nor mortal know beside
Of the inhabitants of all the land. 220
Show me your city; give me, although coarse,
Some cov'ring (if coarse cov'ring *thou* canst give),
And may the Gods thy largest wishes grant,
House, husband, concord! for of all the gifts
Of Heav'n, more precious none I deem, than peace
'Twixt wedded pair, and union undissolv'd;
Envy torments their enemies, but joy
Fills ev'ry virtuous breast, and most their own.
To whom Nausicaa the fair replied:
Stranger! thou seem'st not worthless or unwise. 230
But Jove, whose sov'reign hand to bad men oft

Appoints the happier lot, to thee assigns
 Affliction, which thy part it is t' endure;
 And since the waves have cast thee on our isle,
 Nor garment thou shalt want, nor aught beside
 Due to a suppliant guest like thee forlorn.
 I will both show thee where our city stands,
 And who dwell here. Phæacia's sons possess
 This land; but I am daughter of their king,
 The brave Alcinoüs, on whose sway depends 240
 For strength and wealth the whole Phæacian race.

She said, and to her beauteous maidens gave
 Instant commandment—My attendants, stay!
 Why flee ye thus, and whither from the sight
 Of a mere mortal? Seems he in your eyes
 Some enemy of ours? The heart beats not,
 Nor shall it beat hereafter, which shall come
 An enemy to the Phæacian shores,
 So dear to the immortal Gods are we.
 Remote, amid the billowy Deep, we hold 250
 Our dwelling, utmost of all humankind,
 And free from mixture with a foreign race.
 This man, a miserable wand'rer comes,
 Whom we are bound to cherish, for the poor
 And stranger are from Jove, and trivial gifts
 To such are welcome. Bring ye therefore food
 And wine, my maidens, for the guest's regale,
 And lave him where the stream is shelter'd most.

She spake; they stood, and by each other's words
 Encourag'd, plac'd Ulysses where the bank 260
 O'erhung the stream, as fair Nausicaa bade,
 Daughter of king Alcinoüs the renown'd.
 Apparel also at his side they spread,
 Mantle and vest; and, next, the limpid oil
 Presenting to him in the golden cruise,
 Exhorted him to bathe. The noble chief,
 Ulysses, then the maidens thus bespake:

Ye maidens, stand apart, that I may cleanse,
 Myself, my shoulders from the briny surf,
 And give them oil, which they have wanted long. 270
 But in your presence I bathe not, asham'd
 T' appear uncover'd in a woman's sight.

He said; they went, and to Nausicaa told

His answer; then the hero in the stream
 His shoulders lav'd and loins incrust'd rough
 With the salt spray, and with his hands the scum
 Of the wild ocean from his locks express'd.
 Thus wash'd all over, and refresh'd with oil,
 He put the garments on, Nausicaa's gift.
 Then Pallas, progeny of Jove, his form 280
 Dilated more, and from his head diffus'd
 His curling locks like hyacinthine flow'rs.

As when some artist, by Minerva made
 And Vulcan wise to execute all tasks
 Ingenious, binding with a golden verge
 Bright silver, finishes a graceful work,
 Such grace the Goddess o'er his ample chest
 Copious diffus'd, and o'er his manly brows.
 Retiring, on the beach he sat, with grace
 And dignity illum'd, where, viewing him, 290
 The virgin princess with amazement mark'd
 His beauty, and her damsels thus bespake:

My lovely maidens, listen to my voice!
 Not hated, sure, by all above, this man
 Among Phæacia's godlike sons arrives.
 At first I deem'd him of plebeian sort
 Dishonourable, but he now assumes
 A near resemblance to the Gods above.
 O that myself were his, and that he dwelt
 And would consent to dwell for ever here! 300
 Give him, my maidens, food, and give him wine.

She spake; at whose command, her maidens plac'd
 With prompt alacrity both wine and food
 Before Ulysses; he rapacious ate
 And drank with eager lips, for he had liv'd
 From taste of aliment long time estrang'd.

On other thoughts mean time intent, her charge
 Of folded vestments neat the princess plac'd
 Within the royal wain, then yok'd the mules,
 And to her seat herself ascending, call'd 310
 Ulysses to depart, and thus she spake:

Up, stranger! seek the city. I will lead
 Thy steps toward my royal father's house,
 Where all Phæacia's nobles thou shalt see,
 But thou (for I account thee not unwise)

This course pursue. While through the fields we
pass,
And labours of the rural hind, so long
With my attendants follow fast the mules
And sumpter-carriage. I will be thy guide.
But, once the summit gain'd, on which is built 320
Our city with proud bulwarks fenc'd around,
And lav'd on both sides by its pleasant port
Of narrow entrance, where our gallant barks
Line all the road, each station'd in her place,
And where, adjoining to the splendid fane
Of Neptune, stands the forum with huge stones
From quarries thither drawn, constructed strong,
In which the rigging of their barks they keep,
Sail-cloth, and cordage, and make smooth their oars
(For bow and quiver the Phæacian race 330
Heed not, but masts, and oars, and ships well-pois'd,
With which exulting they divide the flood);
Then, cautious, I would shun their bitter taunts
Disgustful, lest they mock me as I pass;
For of the meaner people some are coarse
In the extreme, and it may chance that one
The basest there, shall, seeing us, exclaim—
What handsome stranger of athletic form
Attends the princess? Where had she the chance
To find him? We shall see them wedded soon. 340
Either she hath receiv'd some vagrant guest
From distant lands (for no land neighbours ours),
Or some Divinity for whom she pin'd,
And whose embrace with ceaseless pray'r she sought,
Hath left the Heav'ns to be for ever hers.
'Tis well if, searching, she have found at last
A husband for herself, since she accounts
All her Phæacian wooers nothing worth
However noble. Thus shall I be scorn'd.
And I should blame, myself, a virgin, much, 350
Who, heedless how she might displease and grieve
Her parents, were familiar with a man
Ere celebration of her spousal rites.
But mark me, stranger! following my advice,
Thou shalt the sooner at my father's hands
Obtain safe conduct and conveyance home.

Sacred to Pallas a delightful grove
Of poplars skirts the road, which we shall reach
Erelong; within that grove a fountain flows,
And meads encircle it; my father's farm 360
Is there, and his luxuriant garden-plot;
A shout might reach it from the city-walls.
There wait, till, in the town arriv'd, we gain
My father's palace; and when reason bids
Suppose us there, then, ent'ring thou the town,
Ask where Alcinoüs dwells, my valiant sire.
His house is easily discern'd; a child
May lead thee to it; for Phæacia's sons
Possess not houses equalling in aught
The mansion of Alcinoüs, the king. 370
Within the court arriv'd, with hasty steps
Advancing, pause not till thou reach the queen,
My mother; she before the blazing hearth,
And at a column's base, sits twisting wool
Ting'd with sea-purple, and behind her sit,
Their task a wondrous web, her busy maids.
There also stands my father's throne, on which
Seated, he drinks and banquets like a God.
Pass that; then suppliant clasp my mother's knees,
So shalt thou quickly see the joyful day 380
Of thy return, though distant far from home.
Yes—if she favour thee, thou mayst indulge
The hope thenceforth to see again thy friends,
Thy mansion, and to tread thy native shores.

So saying, she with her splendid scourge the mules
Lash'd onward. They (the stream soon left behind)
With even footsteps graceful smote the ground;
But so she rul'd them, managing with art
The scourge, as not to leave afar, although
Following on foot, Ulysses and her train. 390
The sun had reach'd the West, when in that grove
To Pallas consecrated they arriv'd,
In which Ulysses sat, and fervent thus
Su'd to the daughter of Jove ægis-arm'd:

Daughter invincible of Jove supreme!
O, hear me! Hear me now, because when erst
The mighty Shaker of the shores incens'd
Toss'd me from wave to wave, thou heard'st me not.

Grant me, among Phæacia's sons to find
Benevolence and pity of my woes !

400

He spake, whose pray'r well-pleas'd the Goddess
heard,

Yet would not, ere he reach'd his native home,
Afford him open aid, through fear t' offend
The brother of her sire, who still pursu'd
Godlike Ulysses with a boundless hate.

BOOK VII.

Argument.

Nausicaa returns from the river, whom Ulysses follows. He halts by her direction at a small distance from the palace, which at a convenient time he enters. He is well received by Alcinous and his queen; and having related to them the manner of his being cast on the shore of Scheria, and received from Alcinous the promise of safe conduct home, retires to rest.



SO pray'd Ulysses in the grove; mean time,
Drawn by her sturdy mules, the royal maid
The city reach'd, and at her father's house
Magnificent arriv'd, the sumpter-wain
Stopp'd in the vestibule; her brothers five,
All godlike youths, assembling quick around,
Releas'd the mules, and bore the raiment in.
Mean time to her own chamber she return'd,
Where, soon as she arriv'd, an ancient dame
Eurymedusa, by peculiar charge 10
Attendant on that service, kindled fire.
Sea-rovers her had from Epirus brought
Long since, and to Alcinoüs she had fall'n
By public gift, for that he govern'd all
Phæacia, and as oft as he harangu'd
The multitude, was rev'renc'd as a God.
She waited on the fair Nausicaa, she
Her fuel kindled, and her food prepar'd.
And now Ulysses from his seat arose
To seek the city, whom his heav'nly friend 20
Minerva in impenetrable mist
Involv'd, lest some Phæacian should insult
His ear with questions—Who, and whence were he?
Then, when within few paces he arriv'd
Of that fair city, meeting him, in form

A little maid, bearing her pitcher forth,
She stood before him, and the noble chief,
Unconscious of the Goddess, thus inquir'd :

Child ! wilt thou not conduct me to the house
Of great Alcinoüs, sov'reign of the land ? 30
For I arrive a stranger here, forlorn,
And from a distant shore, and all who dwell
In all this country are unknown to me.

To whom the Goddess of the azure-eyes :
My stranger-friend ! the mansion of thy search
Myself will show thee ; for not distant dwells
Alcinoüs from my father's own abode :
But hush ! be silent—I will lead the way ;
Mark no man ; question no man ; for the sight
Of strangers is unusual here, and cold 40
The welcome by this people shown to such.
They, trusting in swift ships, by the free grant
Of Neptune traverse his wide waters, borne
As if on wings, or with the speed of thought.

So spake the Goddess, and with nimble pace
Led on, whose footsteps he as quick pursu'd.
But still the seaman-throng through whom he pass'd
Perceiv'd him not ; Minerva, Goddess dread,
That sight forbidding them, whose eyes she dimm'd
With darkness shed miraculous around 50
Her fav'rite chief. Ulysses, wond'ring, mark'd
Their port, their ships, their forum the resort
Of heroes, and their battlements sublime
Fenc'd with sharp stakes around, a glorious show !
But when the king's august abode he reach'd,
Then Pallas thus instructed him again :

My father ! thou behold'st the house, to which
Thou bad'st me lead thee. Thou shalt find our chiefs
And high-born princes banquetting within.
But enter fearing nought, for boldest men 60
Speed ever best, come whencesoe'er they may.
First thou shalt find the queen, Areta nam'd,
Lineal in her descent is she from those
Who gave Alcinoüs birth, her royal spouse.
Neptune begat Nausithoüs, at the first,
On Peribæa, loveliest of her sex,
Latest-born daughter of Eurymedon,

F

Heroic king of the proud giant race,
 Who, losing all his impious people, shar'd
 The same dread fate himself. Her Neptune lov'd 70
 To whom she bore a son, the mighty prince
 Nausithoüs, king of the Phæacian race.
 Nausithoüs himself two sons begat,
 Rhexenor and Alcinoüs. Phœbus slew
 Rhexenor at his home, a bridegroom yet,
 Who, father of no son, one daughter left,
 Areta, wedded to Alcinoüs now,
 And whom the sov'reign in such honour holds,
 As woman none enjoys of all the Earth,
 Whose house is subject to a husband's pow'r. 80
 Such honours have attended long, and still
 Attend her, from her children, from himself
 Alcinoüs, and from all Phæacia's race,
 Who, gazing on her as she were divine,
 Shout when she moves in progress through the town,
 For she no wisdom wants, but sits, herself,
 Arbitress of such contests as arise
 Between her fav'rites, and decides aright.
 If she once favour thee, thou mayst indulge
 The hope, thenceforth, to see again thy friends, 90
 Thy mansion, and to tread thy native shore.

So saying, the Goddess of the azure-eyes
 From pleasant Scheria o'er the barren Deep
 Glided to Marathon, which left afar,
 In spacious Athens she arriv'd, and found,
 Beneath Erectheus' glorious roof, her home.
 Ulysses then toward the palace mov'd
 Of king Alcinoüs, but immers'd in thought
 Stood first, and paus'd, ere with his foot he press'd
 The brazen threshold; for a light he saw 100
 As of the sun or moon illuming clear
 The palace of Phæacia's mighty king.
 Walls plated bright with brass, on either side
 Stretch'd from the portal to th' interiour house,
 With azure cornice crown'd; the doors were gold,
 Which shut the palace fast; silver the posts
 Rear'd on a brazen threshold, and above,
 The lintels, silver, architrav'd with gold.
 Mastiffs, in gold and silver, lin'd the approach

On either side, with art celestial fram'd 110
 By Vulcan, guardians of Alcinoüs' gate
 For ever, unobnoxious to decay.
 Sheer from the threshold to the inner house
 Fix'd thrones the walls through all their length
 adorn'd,
 With mantles overspread of subtlest warp
 Transparent, work of many a female hand.
 On these the princes of Phæacia sat,
 Holding perpetual feasts, while golden youths
 On all the sumptuous altars stood, their hands 119
 With burning torches charg'd, which, night by night,
 Shed radiance over all the festive throng.
 Full fifty female menials serv'd the king
 In household offices; the rapid mills
 These turning pulverize the mellow'd grain;
 Those, seated orderly, the purple fleece
 Wind off, or ply the loom, restless as leaves
 Of lofty poplars flutt'ring in the breeze;
 Bright as with oil the new-wrought texture shone.
 Far as Phæacian mariners all else
 Surpass, the swiftship urging through the floods, 130
 So far in tissue-work the women pass
 All others, by Minerva's self endow'd
 With richest fancy and superiour skill.
 Without the court, and to the gates adjoin'd,
 A spacious garden lay, fenc'd all around
 Secure, four acres measuring complete.
 There grew luxuriant many a lofty tree,
 Pomegranate, pear, the apple blushing bright,
 The honey'd fig, and unctuous olive smooth.
 Those fruits, nor winter's cold nor summer's heat 140
 Fear ever, fail not, wither not, but hang
 Perennial, while unceasing zephyr breathes
 Gently on all, enlarging these, and those
 Maturing genial; in an endless course
 Pears after pears to full dimensions swell,
 Figs follow figs, grapes clust'ring grow again
 Where clusters grew, and (ev'ry apple stripp'd)
 The boughs soon tempt the gath'rer as before.
 There too, well rooted, and of fruit profuse,
 His vineyard grows; part, wide-extended, basks 150

In the sun's beams; the arid level glows;
 In part they gather, and in part they tread
 The wine-press, while, before the eye, the grapes
 Here put their blossom forth, there gather fast
 Their blackness. On the garden's verge extreme
 Flow'rs of all hues smile all the year, arrang'd
 With neatest art judicious, and amid
 The lovely scene two fountains welling forth,
 One visits, into ev'ry part diffus'd,
 The garden-ground, the other soft beneath 160
 The threshold steals into the palace-court,
 Whence ev'ry citizen his vase supplies.

Such were the ample blessings on the house
 Of king Alcinoüs by the Gods bestow'd.

Ulysses wond'ring stood, and when, at length,
 Silent he had the whole fair scene admir'd,
 Enter'd with hasty step the royal gate.
 The chiefs he found and senators within
 Libation pouring to the vigilant spy
 Mercurius, whom with wine they worshipp'd last 170
 Of all the Gods, and at the hour of rest.
 Ulysses, circumfus'd with thickest shades
 By Pallas still, pass'd on, till he arriv'd
 Where king Alcinoüs and Areta sat.
 Around Areta's knees his arms he cast,
 And, in that moment, the mysterious cloud
 Which veil'd his godlike form, all broke away.
 Amazement seiz'd the guests; in mute suspense
 They ey'd the chief, who thus his suit preferr'd:

Areta, daughter of the godlike prince, 180
 Rhexenor! after num'rous woes sustain'd,
 Behold me here a suppliant at thy knees,
 Imploring thee, the king, and these your guests
 (To whom Heav'n grant abundance, and to leave
 Their children in possession of the wealth,
 And all the well-earn'd honours, now their own),
 That ye vouchsafe me swift conveyance hence
 To my regretted home, which, tempest-toss'd
 And wretched, I have sought long time in vain.

Such suit he made, and in the ashes sat 190
 At the hearth-side; they mute long time remain'd,
 Till, at the last, the ancient hero spake,

Echeneus, eldest of Phæacia's sons,
 With eloquence beyond the rest endow'd,
 Rich in traditionary lore, and wise
 In all, who thus, benevolent, began :

Not honourable to thyself, O king !
 Is such a sight, a stranger on the ground,
 Seated beside the hearth, and in the dust.
 Mean time, thy guests, expecting thy command, 200
 Move not ; thou therefore, raising by his hand
 The suppliant, lead him to a seat, and bid
 The heralds mingle wine, that we may pour
 Libation forth to thunder-bearing Jove,
 Dread guardian of the suppliant stranger's rights ;
 Then bid the sewer spread for his regale
 A plenteous board, with viands now within.

Soon as those words Alcinoüs heard, the king,
 Upraising by his hand the prudent chief,
 Ulysses, from the hearth, he made him sit 210
 On a bright throne, displacing for his sake
 Laodamas his son, the virtuous youth,
 Who sat beside him, and whom most he lov'd.
 And now a maiden charg'd with golden ew'r,
 And with an ardent laver, pouring, first,
 Pure water on his hands, before him plac'd
 A polish'd table, which the matron, charg'd
 With service of the guests, with bread supplied
 And viands largely, from her present stores.
 Then ate the hero toil-inur'd, and drank, 220
 And to his herald thus Alcinoüs spake :

Pontonoüs ! mingle wine, and bear it round
 To ev'ry guest in turn, that we may pour
 To thunder-bearer Jove, the stranger's friend,
 And guardian of the suppliant's sacred rights.

He ended, and Pontonoüs, as he bade,
 Mingling delicious wine, the cups dispens'd
 With distribution regular to all.
 When each had made libation, and had drunk
 Sufficient, then, Aleinoüs thus began : 230

Phæacian chiefs and senators, attend,
 While I pronounce the dictates of my heart !
 Ye all have feasted—To your homes and sleep.
 We will assemble at the dawn of day

More senior chiefs, that we may entertain
The stranger here, and to the Gods perform
Due sacrifice; the convoy that he asks
Shall next engage our thoughts, that, free from pain
And from vexation, by our friendly aid
He may revisit, joyful and with speed, 240
His native shore, however far remote.
No inconvenience let him feel or harm,
Ere his arrival; but, arriv'd, thenceforth
He must endure whatever lot the Fates
Spun for him in the moment of his birth.
But should he prove some Deity from Heav'n
Descended, then the Immortals have in view
Designs not yet apparent; for the Gods
Have deign'd not seldom, from of old, to mix
In our solemnities; have fill'd a seat 250
Where we have sat, and made our banquet theirs.
And even if a single traveller
Of the Phæacians meet them, all reserve
They lay aside; for with the Gods we boast
As near affinity as do themselves
The Cyclops, or the Giant race profane.

To whom Ulysses, ever wise, replied:
Alcinoüs! think not so. Resemblance none
In figure or in lineaments I bear
To the immortal tenants of the skies, 260
But to the sons of Earth; if ye have known
A man afflicted with a weight of wo
Peculiar, let me be with him compar'd;
Woes even passing his could I relate,
And all inflicted on me by the Gods.
But let me eat, comfortless as I am,
Uninterrupted; for no call is loud
As that of hunger in the ears of man;
Importunate, unreas'nable, it constrains
His notice, more than all his woes beside. 270
So I much sorrow feel, yet not the less
Hear I the blatant appetite demand
Due sustenance, and with a voice that drowns
E'en all my suff'rings, till itself be fill'd.
But expedite ye at the dawn of day
My safe return into my native land,

After much mis'ry; and let life itself
Forsake me, may I but once more behold
My fair possessions, my domestic train,
And the high-vaulted roof my former home. 280

He spake, whom all applauded, and advis'd,
Unanimous, the guest's conveyance home,
Who had so fitly spoken. When, at length,
All had libation made, and were suffic'd,
Departing to his house, each sought repose.
But still Ulysses in the hall remain'd,
Alcinoüs and Areta at his side;
And while their busy menials clear'd the board,
Areta (for his mantle and his vest
Wrought by her women and herself, she knew) 290
In accents wing'd with eager haste began:

Stranger! the first enquiry shall be mine:
Who art, and whence? From whom receiv'dst thou
these?

Saidst not—I came a wand'rer o'er the Deep?

To whom Ulysses, ever wise, replied:

O queen! the task were difficult t' unfold

In all its length the story of my woes,

For I have num'rous from the Gods receiv'd;

But I will answer thee as best I may.

There is a certain isle, Ogygia, plac'd 300

Far distant in the Deep; there dwells, by man

Alike unvisited, and by the Gods,

Calypso, lovely nymph, but deeply skill'd

In artifice, and terrible in pow'r,

Daughter of Atlas. Me alone my fate

Her miserable inmate made, when Jove

Had riv'n asunder with his candent bolt

My bark in the mid-sea. There perish'd all

The valiant partners of my toils, and I

My vessel's keel embracing day and night 310

With folded arms, nine days was borne along.

But on the tenth dark night, as pleas'd the Gods,

They drove me to Ogygia's island, where

Calypso, dread Divinity, resides.

She rescu'd, cherish'd, fed me, and her wish

Was to confer on me immortal life,

Exempt for ever from the sap of age.

But me her offer'd boon sway'd not. Sev'n years
I there abode continual, with my tears
Bedewing ceaseless my ambrosial robes, 320
Calypso's gift divine; but when, at length
(Seven years elaps'd), the circling eighth arriv'd,
She then, herself, my quick departure thence
Advis'd, by Jove's own mandate overaw'd,
Which even her had influenc'd to a change.
Borne on a well-join'd raft she sent me forth
With num'rous presents; bread she put and wine
On board, and cloth'd me in immortal robes;
She sent before me also a fair wind 329
Fresh-blowing, but not dang'rous. Sev'ntein days
I sail'd the flood, and, on the eighteenth, saw
Your lofty mountain-tops with forests crown'd,
And seeing them rejoic'd; but premature
Was that delight, and soon by Neptune chang'd
'To deepest wo; for he with adverse winds
My course resisted, and, with billows huge
Shatt'ring my raft, constrain'd me sore distress'd
And groaning, to divide with wearied arms
This vast abyss of Ocean, till the winds
And mighty waters cast me on your shore. 340
Me, there emerging, had the tempest driv'n
Full on the land, where incommodious most,
The shore presented only roughest rocks;
But, leaving it, I swam the Deep again,
Until at last a river's gentle stream
Receiv'd me, by no rocks deform'd, and where
No violent winds the shelter'd bank annoy'd.
I flung myself on shore, exhausted, weak,
Needing repose; then came the silent night,
And from the Jove-descended stream withdrawn, 350
I in a thicket laid me down on leaves,
Which I had heap'd together, and the Gods
O'erwhelm'd my eyelids with a flood of sleep.
There, under wither'd leaves, forlorn, I slept
All the long night, the morning, and the noon;
But balmy sleep, at the decline of day,
Broke from me; then, your daughter's train I heard
Sporting, with whom she also sported, fair
And graceful as the Gods. To her I kneel'd.

She swerv'd not from the dictates of a mind 360
Most pure, but pass'd in her behaviour all,
Which even ye could from an age like hers
Have hop'd; for youth is ever indiscreet.
She gave me plenteous food, with richest wine
Refresh'd my spirit, taught me where to bathe,
And cloth'd me as thou seest; thus, though a prey
To many sorrows, I have told thee truth.

To whom Alcinoüs answer thus return'd:
Stranger! my daughter overlook'd at least
One rule of decent manners; for although 370
She first receiv'd thee suppliant, she return'd
With all her women, and thee left to find
These doors, unfriended, and without a guide.

Then answer, thus, the wary chief return'd:
Blame not, O hero, for so slight a cause
Thy faultless child; she bade me follow them;
But I refus'd, by fear and awe restrain'd,
Lest thou shouldst feel displeasure at that sight,
Thyself; for we are all, in ev'ry clime,
Suspicious, and to worst constructions prone. 380

So spake Ulysses; to whom thus the king:
I bear not, stranger! in my breast a heart
Much giv'n to causeless wrath, yet due respect
To decency's demands require from all.
And Jove, Apollo, and Minerva know,
How fervent is my wish, that, being such,
And of such kindred sentiments with mine,
Thou wouldst accept my daughter, wouldst become
My son-in-law, and dwell contented here.
House would I give thee, and possessions too, 390
Were such thy choice; else, if thou choose it not,
No man in all Phæacia shall by force
Detain thee. Jove would disapprove the deed.
For proof, I will appoint thee convoy hence
To-morrow; and while thou by sleep subdu'd
Shalt press thy bed, my people with their oars
Shall brush the placid flood, till thou arrive
At home, or at what place so'er thou wouldst,
Though far more distant than Eubœa lies,
Remotest isle from us, by the report 400
Of ours, who saw it when they thither bore

Sage Rhadamanthus of the golden locks,
To visit earth-born Tityus. To that isle
They went, they reach'd it, and they brought him
thence

Back to Phæacia, in one day, with ease.
Thou also shalt be taught what ships I boast,
Unmatch'd in swiftness, and how far my crews
Excel, upturning with their oars the brine.

He ended, whom Ulysses in his heart
Exulting heard, and praying, thus replied: 410

Eternal Father! may the king perform
His whole kind promise! grant him in all lands
A never-dying name, and grant to me
To visit safe my native shores again!

Thus they conferr'd; and now Areta bade
Her fair attendants dress a fleecy couch
Beneath the portico, with purple rugs
Resplendent, and with arras spread beneath,
And over all with cloaks of shaggy pile.
Forth went the maidens, bearing each a torch, 420
And, as she bade, prepar'd in haste a couch
Of depth commodious; then, returning, gave
Ulysses welcome summons to repose:

Rise, stranger! all is ready; come to rest.
So they; thrice welcome to Ulysses seem'd
Their invitation, and his sculptur'd couch,
Beneath the sounding portico prepar'd,
With willing feet the toil-worn hero sought;
But far within th' interiour palace slept
Alcinoüs, and, lodg'd in royal state, 430
The queen, his virtuous consort, at his side.

BOOK VIII.

Argument.

The Phæacians consult on the subject of Ulysses. Preparation is made for his departure. Alcinous entertains them at his table. Games follow the entertainment. Demodocus, the bard, sings first the loves of Mars and Venus, then the introduction of the wooden house into Troy. Ulysses, much affected by his song, is questioned by Alcinous, whence, and who he is, and what is the cause of his sorrow.

SOON as Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
Look'd forth, upsprang Phæacia's mighty king,
And from his couch the town-destroying chief
Ulysses hasted, whom Alcinoüs led
To early council at the ships conven'd.
Arriving, side by side on polish'd stones
They sat; mean-time, Minerva in the form
Of king Alcinoüs' herald rang'd the town,
With purpose to accelerate the return
Of brave Ulysses to his native home, 10
And thus to ev'ry chief the Goddess spake:

Phæacian chiefs and senators, away!

To council hasting, hear a stranger's tale,
A guest of king Alcinoüs, new-arriv'd,
A shipwreck'd wand'rer hither, of a form
Superiour, and majestic as a God.

So saying, she rous'd the people, and at once
The seats of all the senate-court were fill'd
With fast-assembling throngs, no few of whom
Had mark'd Ulysses with admiring eyes. 20
Then, Pallas o'er his head and shoulders broad
Diffusing grace celestial, his whole form
Dilated, and to statelier height advanc'd,
That worthier of all rev'rence he might seem

To the Phæacians, and might many a feat
Achieve, with which they should his force assay.

When, therefore, the assembly now was full,
Alcinoüs, thus addressing them, began:

Phæacian chiefs and senators attend,
That I may speak as my best judgment bids. 30

This guest, unknown to me, hath, wand'ring, found
My palace, either from the East arriv'd,
Or from some nation on our western side.

Safe conduct home he asks, and our consent
Here wishes ratified, whose quick return

Be it our part, as usual, to promote;

For at no time the stranger, from what coast

Soe'er, who hath resorted to our doors,

Hath long complain'd of his detention here.

Haste—draw ye down into the sacred Deep 40

A vessel of prime speed, and, from among

The people, fifty and two youths select,

Approv'd the best; then lashing fast the oars,

Leave her, that at my palace ye may make

Short feast, for which myself will all provide.

Thus I enjoin the crew; but as for those

Of sceptred rank, I bid them all alike

To my own board, that here we may regale

The stranger nobly, and let none refuse.

Call, too, Demodocus, the bard divine, 50

To share my banquet, whom the Gods have blest

With pow'rs of song delectable, what theme

Soe'er his animated fancy choose.

He ceas'd, and led the way, whom follow'd all

The sceptred senators, and at his house

Mean time a herald sought the bard divine.

Then, fifty mariners and two, from all

The rest selected, to the coast repair'd,

And, from her station on the sea-bank, launch'd

The galley down into the sacred Deep. 60

They plac'd the canvass and the mast on board,

Arrang'd the oars, unfurl'd the shining sail,

And, leaving her in depth of water moor'd,

Resorted to the sov'reign's grand abode.

There soon the portico, the court, the hall

Were fill'd with multitudes of young and old,
 For whose regale the mighty monarch slew
 Two beeves, twelve sheep, and twice four fatted
 brawns.

They flay'd them first, then busily their task
 Administ'ring, prepar'd the joyous feast. 70

And now the herald thither led with care
 The tuneful bard; him partially the Muse
 And dearly lov'd, yet gave him good and ill;
 She quench'd his sight, but gave him strains divine.

For him Pontonoüs in the midst dispos'd
 An argent-studded throne, thrusting it close
 To a tall column, where he hung his lyre
 Above his head, and taught him where it hung.

He set before him next a polish'd board,
 And basket, and a goblet fill'd with wine 80
 For his own use, and at his own command.

Then all assail'd at once the ready feast,
 And when nor hunger more nor thirst they felt,

Then came the Muse, and rous'd the bard to sing
 Exploits of men renown'd; it was a song,

In that day, to the highest Heav'n extoll'd.
 He sang the fierce dispute, which, at a feast

In honour of the Gods at Ilium, chanc'd
 Between Achilles and Laertes' son.

That contest, Agamemnon, king of men, 90
 Between those princes of his host remark'd

With silent joy; for when in Pytho erst
 He pass'd the marble threshold, to consult

The oracle of Apollo, such dispute
 The voice divine had to his ear announc'd;

For then it was, that first the storm of war
 Came rolling on, ordain'd long time to afflict

Troy and the Grecians, by the will of Jove.

So sang the bard illustrious; then his robe
 Of purple dye with both hands o'er his head 100

Ulysses drew, behind its ample folds
 Veiling his face, through fear to be observ'd

By the Phæacians weeping at the song;
 And ever as the bard harmonious ceas'd,

He wip'd his tears, and, drawing from his brows
 The mantle, pour'd libation to the Gods,

But when the chiefs (for they delighted heard
 Those sounds) solicited again the bard,
 And he renew'd the strain, then cov'ring close
 His count'nance, as before, Ulysses wept. 110
 Thus, unperceiv'd by all, the hero mourn'd,
 Save by Alcinoüs; he alone his tears
 (Beside him seated) mark'd, and his deep sighs
 O'erhearing, the Phæacians thus bespake:

Phæcia's chiefs and senators, attend!
 We have long time sat feasting, and long time
 Sat list'ning to the lyre, companion sweet
 And seasonable of the festive hour.
 Now go we forth for honourable proof
 Of our address in games of ev'ry kind, 120
 That this our guest may to his friends report,
 At home arriv'd, that none like us have learn'd,
 To leap, to box, to wrestle, and to run.

So saying, he led them forth, whose steps the guests
 All follow'd, and the herald, hanging high
 The sprightly lyre, took gently by his hand
 Demodocus, and leading him abroad
 Follow'd Phæacia's princes to the games.
 They sought the forum; countless swarm'd the throng
 Behind them as they went, and many a youth 130
 Strong and courageous to the strife arose.

Upstood Acroneus and Ocyalus,
 Elatreus, Nauteus, Prymneus, after whom
 Anchialus with Anabeesineus
 Arose, Eretmeus, Ponteus, Proreus bold,
 Amphialus and Thoön. Then arose,
 In aspect dread as homicidal Mars,
 Euryalus, and for his graceful form
 (After Laodamas) distinguish'd most
 Of all Phæacia's sons, Naubolides. 140

Three also from Alcinoüs sprung, arose,
 Laodamas, his eldest; Halius, next,
 His second-born; and godlike Clytoneus.
 Of these, some started for the runner's prize.
 They gave the race its limits. All at once
 Along the dusty champaign swift they flew.
 But Clytoneus, illustrious youth, outstripp'd
 All competition; far as mules surpass

Slow oxen, furrowing the fallow ground,
So far before all others he arriv'd 150
Victorious, where the throng'd spectators stood.
Some tried the wrestler's toil severe, in which
Euryalus superiour prov'd to all.

In the long leap Amphialus prevail'd;
Elatreus most successful hurl'd the quoit;
And at the cestus, last, the noble son
Of Scheria's king, Laodamas excell'd.

When thus with contemplation of the games
All had been gratified, Alcinoüs' son
Laodamas, arising, them address'd: 160

Friends! ask we now the stranger, if he boast
Proficiency in aught. His figure seems
Not ill; in thighs, and legs, and arms he shows
Much strength, and in his brawny neck; nor youth
Hath left him yet, though batter'd he appears
With num'rous troubles, and misfortune-flaw'd.
Nor know I hardships in the world so sure,
To break the strongest down, as those by sea.

Then answer thus Euryalus return'd:
Thou hast well said, Laodamas; thyself 170
Approaching, speak to him, and call him forth.

Which when Alcinoüs' noble offspring heard,
Advancing from his seat, amid them all
He stood, and to Ulysses thus began:

Stand forth, O guest, thou also; prove thy skill
(If any such thou boast) in games like ours,
Which, likeliest thou hast learn'd; for greater praise
Hath no man, while he lives, than that he know
His feet to exercise and hands aright.
Come, then; make trial; scatter wide thy cares; 180
We will not hold thee long; the ship is launch'd
Already, and the crew stand all prepar'd.

To whom replied the wily chief renown'd:
Wherefore, as in derision, have ye call'd
Me forth, Laodamas, to these exploits?
No games have I, but many a grief, at heart,
And with far other struggles worn, here sit,
Desirous only of conveyance home,
For which both king and people I implore.

Then him Euryalus aloud reproach'd: 190

I well believ'd it, friend ! in thee the guise
 I see not of a man expert in feats
 Athletic, of which various are perform'd
 In ev'ry land ; thou rather seem'st with ships
 Familiar ; one accustom'd to control
 Some crew of trading mariners ; well-learn'd
 In stowage, pilotage, and wealth acquir'd
 By rapine, but of no gymnastic pow'rs.

To whom Ulysses, frowning dark, replied :
 Thou hast ill spoken, sir, and like a man 200
 Regardless whom he wrongs. ' Thus Heav'n, it seems,
 Imparts not, all to one, the various gifts
 And ornaments of body, mind, and speech.
 This man in figure less excels, yet Jove
 Crowns him with eloquence ; his hearers charm'd
 Behold him, while with unassuming tone
 He bears the prize of fluent speech from all,
 And, when he walks the city, as they pass,
 All turn and gaze as they had pass'd a God.
 Another, form'd with symmetry divine, 210
 Yet wants the grace that twines itself around
 The list'ning hearers' hearts. Such deem I thee.
 Thy form is excellent. Not Jove himself
 Could mend it. But thy mind is nothing worth.
 Thou much hast mov'd me ; thy unhandsome phrase
 Hath rous'd my wrath ; I am not as thou say'st,
 A novice in these sports, but took the lead
 In all, while youth and strength were on my side.
 But I am now in bands of sorrow held,
 And of misfortune, having much endur'd 220
 In war, and buffetting the boist'rous waves.
 Yet, though with mis'ry worn, I will essay
 My strength among you ; for thy words hath teeth,
 Whose bite hath pinch'd and pain'd me to the proof.

He said ; and mantled as he was, sprang forth
 And seiz'd a quoit in bulk and weight all those
 Transcending far, by the Phæacians us'd.
 Swiftly he swung, and from his vig'rous hand
 Dismiss'd it. Sang the stone, and as it flew
 The maritime Phæacians low inclin'd 230
 Their heads beneath it ; over all the marks
 It flew with ease, and struck the ground beyond.

Minerva, in a human form, the cast
Prodigious measur'd, and aloud exclaim'd:

Stranger! the blind himself might with his hands
Feel out the 'vantage here, so far thy quoit
Hath left its best competitors behind.

This prize, be sure, is thine; for, of us all,
Thy measure none will reach, much less exceed.

She ceas'd; Ulysses, hardy chief, rejoic'd 240
That in the circus he had found a judge
So favourable, and with brisker tone,
As less in wrath, the multitude address'd:

Young men reach this, and I will quickly heave
Another such, or yet a heavier quoit.
Then come the man, whose courage prompts him
forth,

To box, to wrestle with me, or to run;
For ye have chaf'd me much, and I decline
No strife with any here, but challenge all
Phæacia, save Laodamas alone. 250

He is mine host. Who combats with his friend?
To call to proof of hardiment the man,
Who entertains him in a foreign land,
Would but evince the challenger a fool,
Who so should cripple his own int'rest there.

As for the rest, I none refuse, scorn none,
But wish for trial of you, and to match
In opposition fair my force with yours.
There is no game athletic in the use
Of all mankind too difficult for me; 260

I handle well the polish'd bow, and first
Amid a thousand foes strike whom I mark,
Although a band of warriors on my side
At the same foe their num'rous arrows aim.

Of all the Grecians who at Ilium erst
Drew bow, the sole superiour to myself
Was Philoctetes; and of all mankind
Now living, I will yield to none besides.

Yet will I not profess myself expert
As some of ancient times, as Hercules, 270
Or as Æchalian Eurytus, who durst
The Gods themselves in archery defy.

Soon, therefore, died hugh Eurytus, ere yet

Old age he reach'd; him, angry to be call'd
 To proof of archership, Apollo slew.
 But if ye name the spear, mine flies a length
 By no man's arrow reach'd; nor fear I foil
 From the Phæacians save in speed alone;
 For I have suffer'd hardships, dash'd and drench'd
 By many a wave, nor had I food on board 280
 At all times, therefore am I much unstrung.

He spake, and silent the Phæacians sat,
 Of whom alone Alcinoüs thus replied:

Since, stranger, not ungraceful is thy speech,
 Who hast but vindicated in our ears
 Thy question'd prowess, angry that this youth
 Reproach'd thee in the presence of us all,
 That no man, qualified to give his voice
 In public, might affront thy courage more;
 Now mark me, therefore, that in time to come, 290
 While feasting with thy children and thy spouse,
 Thou mayst inform the heroes of thy land,
 That even we some skill can boast in arts
 By Jove enjoin'd us in our fathers' days.
 We boast not much the boxer's skill, nor yet
 The wrestler's; but light-footed in the race
 Are we, and navigators well inform'd.
 Our pleasures are the feast, the harp, the dance,
 Garments for change; the tepid bath; the bed.
 Come, ye Phæacians, beyond others taught 300
 To tread the circus with harmonious steps,
 Come, play before us; that our guest, arriv'd
 In his own country, may inform his friends
 How far in seamanship we all excel,
 In running, in the dance, and in the song.
 Hence, therefore, herald! Bring the tuneful bard
 His lyre, left somewhere in our hall at home.

So spake the godlike king, at whose command
 The herald to the palace quick return'd
 To seek the charming lyre. Mean time arose 310
 Nine public umpires, offic'd to correct
 All rude disturbance of the games, to smooth
 The circus, to repress the curious throng,
 And give the narrow'd ring an ampler round.
 Then came the herald sent to seek the lyre;

With which supplied, Demodocus advanc'd
Into the middle area, where a band
Of blooming youths all practis'd in the dance,
Encircled him. With nimble steps they smote
The sacred floor, so swift, that with amaze 320
Ulysses ey'd them, dazzled at the sight.

And now Demodocus his tuneful chords
Adapted to a sprightlier train, the loves
Of Mars and Cytherea chaplet-crown'd;
How, first, clandestine, they embrac'd beneath
The roof of Vulcan; her, by many a gift
Seduc'd, Mars won, and with adult'rous lust
The bed dishonour'd of the King of fire.
The Sun, a witness of their am'rous sport,
Bore swift the tale to Vulcan; he, appris'd 330
Of that foul deed, at once his smithy sought,
In secret darkness of his inmost soul
Contriving vengeance; to the stock he heav'd
His anvil huge, on which he forg'd a snare
Of bands indissoluble, by no art
To be untied, durance for ever firm.

The net prepar'd, he bore it, fiery-wroth,
To his own chamber and his nuptial couch;
Where, stretching them from post to post, he wrapp'd
With those fine meshes all his bed around, 340
And hung them num'rous from the roof, diffus'd
Like spiders' filaments, which not the Gods
Themselves could see, so subtle were the toils.
When thus he had encircled all his bed
On ev'ry side, he feign'd a journey thence
To Lemnos, of all cities that adorn
The Earth, the city that he favours most.

Nor Mars, who reins with gold his fiery steeds,
Kept drowsy watch, but mark'd the going forth
Of the illustrious artist from his home, 350
And thither flew, impatient to enjoy
The Goddess with the wreath-encircled brows.

She, newly from her potent sire return'd,
The son of Saturn, sat. Mars, ent'ring, seiz'd
Her snow-white hand; which grasping, thus he said:

To bed, my fair, and let us love! for lo!
Thine husband is from home, to Lemnos gone,

And to the Sintians, men of barb'rous speech.

He spake, nor she was loth, but bedward too
Like him inclin'd; so then to bed they went, 360

And as they laid them down, down stream'd the net

Around them, labour exquisite of hands

By ingenuity divine inform'd.

Small room they found, so prison'd; not a limb

Could either lift, or move, but felt at once

Entanglement, from which was no escape.

And now, ere he had reach'd the Lemnian isle,

Returning (for his faithful spy the Sun

Had told him all), with aching heart approach'd

The limping Deity. Resentment boil'd 370

Within him; in his vestibule he stood,

And roar'd tremendous to the Pow'rs of Heav'n:

O Jove! and all ye Pow'rs for ever blest!

Look forth, and witness with your eyes a sight

Both ludicrous and not to be endur'd.

Behold how Venus, for my lameness' sake,

Dishonours *me*, and loves the fiery Mars!

And wherefore? for that he is fair in form,

And sound of foot, but feeble I and lame.

Whose fault is this? Their fault, and theirs alone,

Who gave me being; ill-employ'd were they 381

Begetting me, one better far unborn.

See where they couch together on my bed

Lascivious! ah, sight hateful to my eyes!

Yet cooler wishes will they feel, I ween,

To press my bed hereafter; here to sleep

Will little please them, fondly as they love.

But these my toils and tangles will suffice,

To hold them here, till Jove shall yield me back

Complete the sum of all my nuptial gifts, 390

Paid to him for the shameless strumpet's sake,

His daughter, as incontinent as fair.

He said, and in the brazen-floor'd abode

Of Jove the Gods assembled. Neptune came,

Earth-circling Pow'r; came Hermes, friend of man;

And, regent of the far-commanding bow,

Apollo also came; but coy reserve

Forbade the Goddesses to share the scene.

The Gods, by whose beneficence all live,

Stood in the portal; infinite arose 400
The laugh of Heav'n, all looking down intent
On that shrewd project of the smith divine,
And, turning to each other, thus they said :

Bad works speed ill. The slow o'ertakes the swift.
So Vulcan, tardy as he is, by craft
Hath outstripp'd Mars, although the fleetest far
Of all who dwell in Heav'n, and the light-heel'd
Must pay the adult'rer's forfeit to the lame.

So spake the Gods; and thus in Hermes' ear
The King of radiant shafts, Apollo, next : 410
Jove's son, Heav'n's herald, Hermes, bounteous
God !

Wouldst *thou* such stricture close of bands endure
For golden Venus lying at thy side ?

Whom answer'd thus the messenger of Heav'n :
Archer divine ! yea, and with all my heart ;
And be the bands, which wind us round about,
Thrice these, innumerable, and let all
The Gods and Goddesses in Heav'n look on,
So I may lovely Venus clasp the while.

He spake ; then laugh'd the Immortal pow'rs again.
But not so Neptune ; he with earnest suit 421
The glorious artist urg'd to the release
Of Mars, and thus in accents wing'd he said :

Loose him ; accept my promise ; he shall pay
Full recompense in presence of us all.

To whom the glorious Artist of the skies :
Earth-circling Neptune ! Spare me that demand.
Lame suitor, lame security. What snares
Could I contrive, that should imprison thee
In presence of the Gods, were Mars releas'd, 430
And free to leave both debt and bands behind ?

Him answer'd then the Shaker of the shores :
I tell thee, Vulcan, that if Mars by flight
Shun payment, I will pay, myself, the fine,

To whom the glorious Artist of the skies :
Thou must not, canst not, shalt not be refus'd.

So saying, the might of Vulcan loos'd the snare,
And they, detain'd by those coercive bands
No longer, from the couch upstarting, flew,
Mars into Thrace, and to her Paphian home 440

The Queen of smiles, where deep in myrtle groves
 Her incense-breathing altar stands embow'r'd.
 Her there the Graces lav'd, and oils diffus'd
 O'er all her form, ambrosial, such as add
 Fresh beauty to the Gods for ever young,
 And cloth'd her in the loveliest robes of Heav'n.

Such was the theme of the illustrious bard.
 Ulysses with delight that song, and all
 The maritime Phæacian concourse, heard.

Alcinoüs then (for in the dance they pass'd 450
 All others) call'd his sons to dance alone,
 Halius and Laodamas; he gave
 The purple ball into their hands, the work
 Exact of Polybus; one, resupine,
 Upcast it high toward the dusky clouds,
 The other, springing into air, with ease
 Receiv'd it, ere he sank to Earth again.
 When thus they oft had sported with the ball
 Thrown upward, next with nimble interchange
 They pass'd it to each other many a time, 460
 Footing the plain, while ev'ry youth around
 The circus clapp'd his hands, and from beneath
 The din of stamping feet fill'd all the air.

Then, turning to Alcinoüs, thus the wise
 Ulysses spake: Alcinoüs! mighty king!
 Illustrious above all Phæacia's sons!
 Incomparable are ye in the dance,
 Ev'n as thou saidst. Astonish'd I behold
 Feats unperform'd but by yourselves alone.

His praise the king Alcinoüs with delight 470
 Receiv'd, and the Phæacians thus bespake:
 Phæacian chiefs and senators, attend!
 Wisdom beyond the common stint I mark
 In this our guest; good cause, in my account,
 For which we should present him with a pledge
 Of hospitality and love. The chiefs
 Are twelve, who, highest in command, control
 The people, and the thirteenth chief am I.
 Bring each a golden talent, with a vest
 Well-bleach'd, and tunick; gratified with these, 480
 The stranger to our banquet shall repair
 Exulting; bring them all without delay;

And let Euryalus by word and gift
Appease him, for his speech was unadvis'd.

He ceas'd, whom all applauded, and at once
Each sent his herald forth to bring the gifts,
When thus Euryalus the king address'd :

Alcinoüs ! o'er Phæacia's sons supreme !
I will appease the stranger, as thou bidd'st.
This sword shall be his own, the blade all steel, 490
The hilt of silver, and the unsullied sheath
Of iv'ry recent from the carver's hand.
A gift like this he shall not need despise.

So saying, his silver-studded sword he gave
Into his grasp, and, courteous, thus began :

Hail, honour'd stranger ! and if word of mine
Have harm'd thee, rashly spoken, let the winds
Bear all remembrance of it swift away !
May the Gods give thee to behold again
Thy wife, and to attain thy native shore, 500
Whence absent long, thou hast so much endur'd !

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied :
Hail also thou ; and may the Gods, my friend,
Grant thee felicity, and may never want
Of this thy sword touch thee in time to come,
By whose kind phrase appeas'd my wrath subsides :

So spake Ulysses, and the glitt'ring sword
Athwart his shoulders slung. Now sank the sun,
And those rich gifts arriv'd, which to the house
Of king Alcinoüs the heralds bore. 510

Alcinoüs' sons receiv'd them, and beside
Their royal mother plac'd the precious charge.
The king then led the way ; at whose abode
Arriv'd, again they press'd their lofty thrones,
And to Areta thus the monarch spake :

Haste, bring a coffer ; bring thy best, and store
A mantle and a sumptuous vest within ;
Warm for him, next, a brazen bath, by which
Refresh'd, and viewing in fair order plac'd
The noble gifts by the Phæacian lords 520
Conferr'd on him, he may the more enjoy
Our banquet, and the bard's harmonious song.
I give him also this my golden cup
Splendid, elaborate ; that, while he lives,

What time he pours libation forth to Jove
And all the Gods, he may remember me.

He ended; at whose words Areta bade
Her maidens with dispatch place o'er the fire
An ample tripod; they, at her command,
A tripod o'er the glowing embers plac'd, 530
Water infus'd, and kindled wood beneath.
The flames, encircling bright the bellied vase,
Warm'd soon the flood within. Mean time, the queen,
Producing from her chamber-stores a chest
All-elegant, within it plac'd the gold
And raiment, gifts of the Phæacian chiefs,
With her own gifts, the mantle and the vest,
And in wing'd accents to Ulysses said:

Now take, thyself, the coffer's lid in charge;
Girdle it quickly with a cord, lest loss 540
Befall thee on thy way, while thou perchance
Shalt sleep secure on board the sable bark.

Which when illustrious Ulysses heard,
Closing the chest, he girded it around,
And with a knot most intricate, erewhile
By Circe taught him, made the cord secure.
And now the mistress of the household charge
Summon'd him to his bath; he glad beheld
The steaming vase, uncustom'd to its use
E'er since he left Ogygia, where he knew 550
No want of aught, attended like a God,
Now, therefore, once again by female hands
Lav'd and anointed, and with rich attire,
Both vest and mantle, serv'd, he left the bath
With sprightlier steps, and sought the social hall,
To share the feast of wine; but, as he pass'd,
Nausicaa, to whom the Gods had giv'n
Surpassing beauty, saw him, where she stood
Beside the portal, with admiring eyes,
And in wing'd accents thus the chief address'd: 560

Hail, stranger! at thy native home arriv'd,
Remember me, thy first deliv'rer here.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied:
Nausicaa! daughter of the noble king
Alcinoüs! So may Jove, high-thund'ring mate
Of Juno, grant me to behold again

My native land, and my delightful home,
As, even there, I will present my vows
To thee, adoring thee as I adore
The Gods themselves, virgin, by whom I live! 570

He said, and on his throne beside the king
Alcinous sat. And now they portion'd out
The feast to all, and charg'd the cups with wine;
And introducing by his hand the bard,
Phæacia's glory, at the column's side
The herald plac'd Demodocus again.

Then, carving forth a portion from the loins
Of a huge brawn, of which uneaten still
Large part and delicate remain'd, thus spake
Ulysses—Herald! bear it to the bard 580
For his regale, whom I will soon embrace
In spite of sorrow; for respect is due
And veneration to the sacred bard
From all mankind, for that the Muse inspires
Herself his song, and loves the tuneful tribe.

He ended, and the herald bore his charge
To the old hero, who with joy receiv'd
That meed of honour at the bearer's hand.
Then all at once assail'd the ready feast,
And when nor hunger more nor thirst they felt, 590
Thus to Demodocus Ulysses spake:

Demodocus! I give thee praise above
All mortal men; since either thee the Muse,
Jove's tuneful daughter, or the son of Jove,
Apollo, prompts; for of Achaia's host,
Their glorious deeds and arduous toils, thou sing'st
As thou hadst present been thyself, or learnt
From others present there the mournful tale.
Come, then, proceed; that rare invention sing,
The horse of wood, which by Minerva's aid 600
Epeus fram'd, and which Ulysses erst
Convey'd into the citadel of Troy
With warriors fill'd, who laid all Ilium waste.
Sing but this theme as sweetly, and thenceforth
I will proclaim thee in all ears a bard
Of pow'rs divine, and by the Gods inspir'd.

He ended; then Apollo with full force
Rush'd on Demodocus, and he began:

What time the Greeks, first firing their own camp,
Steer'd all their galleys from the shore of Troy, 610
Already, in the horse conceal'd, his band
Around Ulysses sat; for Ilium's sons
Had drawn it to the citadel themselves,
And there the mischief stood. Then strife arose
Among the Trojans compassing the horse,
And threefold was the doubt; whether to cleave
The hollow trunk asunder, or, updrawn
Aloft, to cast it headlong from the rocks,
Or to permit the enormous image, kept
Entire, to stand an off'ring to the Gods, 620
Which was their destin'd course; for Fate had fix'd
Their ruin sure, when once they had receiv'd
Within their walls that engine huge, in which
Sat all the bravest Greeceans with the fate
Of Ilium charg'd, and slaughter of her sons.
He sang, how, from the horse effus'd, the Greeks
Left their capacious ambush, and the town
Made desolate. To others, in his song,
He gave the praise of wasting all beside,
But told how, fierce as Mars, Ulysses, join'd 630
With godlike Menelaus, in his house
Assail'd Deiphobus; him there engag'd
In direst fight he sang, and, through the aid
Of glorious Pallas, conqu'ror over all.

So sang the bard illustrious, at whose song
Ulysses melted, and tear following tear
Fell on his cheeks. As when a woman weeps
Her husband, fall'n in battle for her sake
And for his children's sake, before the gate
Of his own city; sinking to his side, 640
She close enfolds him with a last embrace,
And, gazing on him as he pants and dies,
Shrieks at the sight; mean time the ruthless foe,
Smiting her shoulders with the spear, to toil
Command her, and to bondage far away,
And her cheek fades with horror at the sound;
Ulysses so from his moist lids let fall
The frequent tear. Unnotic'd by the rest
Those drops, but not by king Alcinoüs, fell,
Who seated at his side, his heavy sighs 650

Remark'd, and the Phæacians thus bespake:

Phæacian chiefs and senators, attend!
Now bid the bard withhold his skilful hand,
Since not alike delightful to us all
Is this new theme, which hearing (while ourselves
Have supp'd and listen'd to the noble strain
Well-pleas'd), the stranger hath not ceas'd from tears
And lamentation, by remembrance caus'd
Or some great wo, which wraps his soul around;
Bid therefore cease the bard, that all alike 660
Be gratified, the stranger and ourselves,
As is most seemly; for his conduct hence
To his own home, and these our lib'ral gifts
Prove that we prize him, as the soul that feels,
Though in the least degree, will ever prize
And as a brother love the suppliant guest.
And thou conceal not, artfully reserv'd,
What I shall ask, far better plain declar'd
Than smother'd close; who art thou? speak thy
name,

The name by which thy father, mother, friends, 670
And fellow-citizens, with all who dwell
Around thy native city, in times past
Have known thee; for of all things human none
Lives altogether nameless, whether base
By birth, or noble, but each man receives,
Ev'n in the moment of his birth, a name.
Thy country, people, city, tell; the mark
At which my ships, intelligent, shall aim,
That they may bear thee thither; for our ships
No pilot need or helm, as ships are wont, 680
But know, themselves, our purpose; know beside
All cities, and all fruitful regions well
Of all the Earth; and, though in clouds involv'd,
Skim the rude billows, fearing neither wreck
Nor inj'ry, rage the tempest as it may.
Yet thus, long since, my father I have heard,
Nausithoüs, speaking; Neptune, he would say,
Is angry with us, for that safe we bear
Strangers of ev'ry nation to their home;
And he foretold a time, when he would break 690
In pieces some Phæacian gallant bark

Returning after convoy of her charge,
And that, behind a mountain huge conceal'd,
Our city should, thenceforth, be found no more.

So spake my hoary sire, which let the God
At his own pleasure do, or leave undone.
But tell me truth, and plainly. Where have been
Thy wand'rings? in what regions of the Earth
Hast thou arriv'd? what nations hast thou seen,
What cities? say, how many hast thou found 700
Harsh, savage, and unjust? how many, kind
To strangers, and dispos'd to fear the Gods?
Say also, from what secret grief of heart
Thy sorrows flow, oft as thou hear'st the fate
Of the Achaians or of Ilium sung?
That fate the Gods prepar'd; they spin the thread
Of man's destruction, that in after days
The bard may make the sad event his theme.
Perish'd thy father or thy brother there?
Or hast thou at the siege of Ilium lost 710
Father-in-law, or son-in-law? for such
Are next and dearest to us after those
Who share our own descent; or was the dead
Thy bosom-friend, whose heart was as thy own?
For worthy as a brother of our love
The constant friend and the discreet I deem.

BOOK IX.

Argument.

Ulysses discovers himself to the Phæacians, and begins the history of his adventures. He destroys Ismarus, city of the Ciconians; arrives among the Lotophagi; and afterward at the land of the Cyclops. He is imprisoned by Polypheme in his cave, who devours six of his companions; intoxicates the monster with wine, blinds him while he sleeps, and escapes from him.

THEN answer, thus, Ulysses wise return'd:
Alcinoüs ! o'er Phæacia's sons supreme !
Pleasant it is to listen, while a bard
Like this, melodious as Apollo, sings.
The world, in my account, no sight affords
More gratifying, than a people blest
With cheerfulness and peace, a palace throng'd
With guests in order seated and regal'd
With harp and song, while plenteous viands steam
On ev'ry table, and the cups, with wine 10
From brimming beakers fill'd, pass brisk around.
No lovelier sight know I. But thou, it seems,
Thy thoughts hast turn'd to ask me whence my groans
And tears, that I may sorrow still the more.
What first, what next, what last shall I rehearse,
On whom the Gods have shower'd such various woes ?
Learn first my name, that even in this land
Remote I may be known, and that, escap'd
From all adversity, I may requite
Hereafter this your hospitable care 20
At my own home, though distant far from yours.
I am Ulysses, fam'd in all the Earth
For subtlest wisdom, and renown'd to Heav'n,
The offspring of Laertes; my abode
Is sun-burnt Ithaca; there stands, his boughs

Waving, the mountain Neritus sublime,
 And it is neighbour'd close by clust'ring isles
 All populous; thence Samos is beheld,
 Dulichium, and Zacynthus forest-clad.
 Flat on the Deep she lies, farthest remov'd 30
 Toward the West, while, situate apart,
 Her sister islands face the rising day;
 Rugged she is, but fruitful nurse of sons
 Magnanimous; nor shall these eyes behold,
 Elsewhere, an object dear and sweet as she.
 Calypso, beauteous Goddess, in her grot
 Detain'd me, wishing me her own espous'd;
 Ææan Circe also, deeply skill'd
 In subtlest arts, within her palace long
 Detain'd me, wishing me her own espous'd: 40
 But never could they warp my constant mind.
 So much our parents and our native soil
 Attract us most, and even though our lot
 Be fair and plenteous in a foreign land.
 But come—my painful voyage, such as Jove
 Gave me from Ilium, I will now relate.

From Troy to Thracian Ismarus I sail'd,
 City of the Ciconians; them I slew,
 And laid their city waste; whence bringing forth
 Much spoil with all their wives, I portion'd it 50
 With equal hand, and each receiv'd a share.
 Next I exhorted to immediate flight
 My people; but in vain; they madly scorn'd
 My sober counsel, and much wine they drank,
 And sheep and beeves slew num'rous on the shore.
 Mean time, Ciconians to Ciconians call'd,
 Their neighbours summoning, a mightier host
 And braver, dwelling distant from the shore,
 And skilful, either mounted, to maintain
 Fierce fight, or if occasion bade, on foot. 60
 Num'rous they came as leaves, or vernal flow'rs
 At day-spring. Then, by the decree of Jove,
 Misfortune found us. At the ships we stood
 Piercing each other with the brazen spear,
 And till the morning brighten'd into noon,
 Few as we were, we yet withstood them all;
 But, when the sun verg'd westward, then the Greeks

Fell back, and the Ciconian host prevail'd.
Six warlike Grecians from each galley's crew
Perish'd in that dread field; the rest escap'd. 70

Thus, after loss of many, we pursu'd
Our course, yet, difficult as was our flight,
Went not till first we had invok'd by name
Our friends whom the Ciconians had destroy'd.
But ether's Sov'reign, Jove, assail'd us soon
With a tempestuous North-wind; Earth alike
And sea with storms he overhung, and night
Fell fast from Heav'n. Their heads deep-plunging oft
Our galleys flew, and rent, and rent again,
Our tatter'd sail-cloth crackled in the wind. 80

We, fearing instant death, within the barks
Our canvass lodg'd, and, toiling strenuous, reach'd
At length the continent. Two nights we lay
Continual there, and two long days, consum'd
With toil and grief; but when the beauteous morn
Had brought, at length, the third day to a close
(Our masts erected, and white sails unfurl'd),
Again we sat on board; mean time, the winds,
Well manag'd by the steersman, urg'd us on.

And now, all danger pass'd, I had attain'd 90
My native shore, but, doubling in my course
Malea, waves, and currents, and North winds
Constrain'd me devious to Cythera's isle.

Nine days by cruel storms I thence was borne
Athwart the fishy deep, but on the tenth
Reach'd to Lotophagi, a race sustain'd
On sweetest fruit alone. There quitting ship,
We landed and drew water, and the crews
Beside the vessel took their ev'ning cheer.

When hasty we had thus our strength renew'd, 100
I order'd forth my people to inquire
(Two I selected from the rest, with whom
I join'd a herald, third) what race of men
Might there inhabit. They departing mix'd
With the Lotophagi; nor hostile aught
Or savage the Lotophagi devis'd
Against our friends, but offer'd to their taste
The lotus; of which fruit what man soe'er
Once tasted, no desire felt he to come

With tidings back, or seek his country more, 110
 But rather wish'd to feed on lotus still
 With the Lotophagi, and to renounce
 All thoughts of home. Them therefore I constrain'd
 Weeping on board, and, dragging each beneath
 The benches, bound him there. Then all in haste
 I urg'd my people to ascend again
 Their hollow barks, lest others also, fed
 With fruit of lotus, should forget their home.
 They quick embark'd, and, on the benches rang'd
 In order, thresh'd with oars the foamy flood. 120

Thence, o'er the Deep proceeding sad, we reach'd
 The land at length, where, giant-siz'd and free
 From all constraint of law, the Cyclops dwell.
 They, trusting to the Gods, plant not, or plough,
 But earth unsow'd, untill'd, brings forth for them
 All fruits, wheat, barley, and the vinous grape
 Large-cluster'd, nourish'd by the show'rs of Jove.
 No councils they convene, no laws contrive,
 But caverns deep inhabit on the heads
 Of lofty mountains, judging each his own, 130
 And heedless of the welfare of the rest.
 In front of the Cyclopean haven lies,
 Nor close nor yet remote, an island, small
 And cloth'd with woods. There wild-goats undis-
 turb'd

Breed numberless; for never huntsman there,
 Inur'd to toil and hardship while he roams
 The dreary woodland heights, their track pursues;
 No fleecy flocks dwell there, nor plough is known,
 But the unseeded and unfurrow'd soil
 Year after year, a wilderness by man 140
 Untrodden, food for blatant goats supplies.
 For crimson galleys none the Cyclops own,
 Nor naval artist, whose industrious hand
 Might build them barks for intercourse by sea
 With distant cities, as the practice is,
 For mutual 'vantage' sake, of wiser man,
 Else man might people and improve their isle,
 Not sterile in itself, but apt to yield,
 In their due season, fruits of ev'ry kind.
 For stretch'd beside the hoary ocean lie 150

Green meadows moist, where vines would never fail;
Light is the land, and they might yearly reap
The tallest crops, so unctuous is the glebe.
Safe is its haven also, where no need
Of cable is or anchor, or to lash
The hawser fast ashore, but pushing in
His bark, the mariner might there abide,
Till rising gales should tempt him forth again.

At bottom of the bay clear water runs,
Issuing from a cove hemm'd all around 160

With poplars; down into that bay we steer'd
Amid the darkness of the night, some God
Conducting us; for all unseen it lay,
Such gloom involv'd the fleet, nor shone the moon
From Heav'n to light us, veil'd by pitchy clouds.
Hence neither island we, nor lofty surge
Rolling towards the beach, descried, or ere
Our vessels struck the ground; but when they struck,
Then, low'ring all our sails, we disembark'd,
And on the sea-beach slept till dawn appear'd. 170

Soon as Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
Look'd rosy forth, we, with admiring eyes
The isle surveying, roam'd it wide around.
Mean time the nymphs, Jove's daughters, rous'd the
goats

Bred on the mountains, to supply with food
The partners of my toils; then bringing forth
Bows and long-pointed jav'lines from the ships,
Divided all into three sep'rate bands;
We struck them, and the Gods requited soon
Our skill, so frequent on all sides they fell. 180

Twelve ships attended me, and ev'ry ship
Nine goats receiv'd by lot; myself alone
Selected ten. All day, till set of sun,
We, feasting largely, sat, and drinking wine
Delicious without stint; for dearth was none
Of ruddy wine on board, but much remain'd,
For much we found at Ismarus, where each
His vessel fill'd, when we despoil'd the town.
Thence, looking to the near Cyclopean shore,
We saw smoke rising, and a mingled din 190

Of sheep, and goats, and of their owners heard.
Now sank the sun, and (night o'ershad'wing all)
We slept along the shore; but when again
The rosy-finger'd daughter of the dawn
Look'd forth, my crews conven'd, I thus began:

My friends! rest here, while, seeking yonder coast
With my own bark and people, I inquire
If the inhabitants be wild, unjust,
And to contention giv'n, or well-dispos'd
To strangers, and a race who fear the Gods. 200

So saying, I climb'd my bark, and bade my crew,
Casting her hawsers loose, attend me thence.
Obedient they soon enter'd, and with oars
Well-tim'd and even thresh'd the foamy flood.
Erelong, arriving on the coast, we found
At its extremity, fast by the sea,
A cavern, lofty, and dark-brow'd above
With laurels; in that cavern slumb'ring lay
Much cattle, sheep and goats, and a broad court
Enclos'd it, fenc'd with stones from quarries hewn, 210
With spiry firs, and oaks of ample bough.
Here dwelt a giant vast, who far remote
His flocks fed solitary, converse none
Desiring, sullen, savage, and unjust,
Monster, in truth, he was, hideous in form,
Far less resembling man by bread sustain'd,
Than some huge mountain-summit, tufted thick
With trees and shrubs, and tow'ring o'er the rest.
Enjoining then my people to abide
Fast by the ship, which they should closely guard, 220
I went; but not without a goat-skin fill'd
With richest wine, from Maron erst receiv'd,
The offspring of Evanthès, and the priest
Of Phœbus, whom in Ismarus I sav'd,
And, with himself, his children, and his wife,
Through rev'rence of Apollo; for he dwelt
Amid the laurels sacred to his God.
He gave me, therefore, noble gifts; from him
Sev'n talents I receiv'd of beaten gold,
A beaker, argent all, and after these 230
No fewer than twelve jars with wine replete,

Rich, unadult'rate, drink for Gods; nor knew
One servant, male or female, of that wine
In all his house; none knew it, save himself,
His wife, and the intendant of his stores.
Oft as they drank that luscious juice, he slak'd
A single cup with twenty from the stream,
And even then the beaker breath'd abroad
A scent celestial, which whoever smelt,
Thenceforth no pleasure found it to abstain. 240
Charg'd with an ample goat-skin of this wine
I went, and with provision in a bag;
But felt a sudden presage in my soul,
That, haply, with terrific force endu'd,
Some savage would appear, untaught the laws
That guard the social rites of humankind.
We fearless enter'd his abode, but him
Found not, then pasturing his flocks abroad.
With curious eyes his cavern we explor'd
From side to side; his strainers hung with cheese 250
Distended, and with lambs and kids his pens
Were crowded close, all sorted by their age
In sep'rate folds; the fullest-siz'd apart,
Apart from these the smaller, and the least
Also apart. His pails and bowls with whey
Swam all, neat vessels into which he milk'd.
Me then my friends first importun'd to take
A portion of his cheeses, then to drive
Forth from the sheep-cotes to the rapid bark
His kids and lambs, and plough the brine again. 260
But me they mov'd not, happier had they mov'd!
I wish'd to see him, and to gain, perchance,
Some pledge of hospitality from one,
No pleasant host, when he should once appear.
Then, kindling fire, we offer'd to the Gods,
And of his cheeses eating, patient sat
Till home he trudg'd from pasture. Charg'd he came
With dry wood bundled, an enormous load,
Fuel by which to sup. Loud crash'd the thorns,
Which down he cast before the cavern's mouth. 270
To whose interiour nooks we trembling flew.
At once he drove into his spacious cave
His batten'd flock, all those which gave him milk,

But left the males, both rams and goats, abroad,
 And with a rock (uplifting it with ease)
 Shut close his cavern's mouth. It was a load,
 Which all the teams of twenty and two wains
 Of amplest size had toil'd in vain to move.
 Such was the crag, that serv'd him as a door
 For his capacious cave. Then down he sat, 280
 And milking one by one, his goats and ewes,
 Applied her yeanling to the teats of each,
 And thick'ning half with rennet, thrust the curd
 Into his wicker sieves, but stor'd the rest
 In pans and bowls—his customary drink.
 His labours thus perform'd, he kindled, last,
 His fuel, and discerning *us*, inquir'd:

Friends, speak your names, and answer, whence
 ye come?

Plough ye the Deep for traffic, or at large
 As pirates rove, who, fearing nought themselves, 290
 Alarm and terrour bear to foreign shores?

He ceas'd. We, struck with horror, heard the
 growl

Of his big voice, and view'd his form uncouth;
 To whom, though sore appall'd, I thus replied:

Of Greece are we, and bound from Ilium home,
 Have wander'd wide the expanse of ocean, sport
 For ev'ry wind, and driven from our course
 (Such was the will of Jove), have landed here.
 We boast ourselves of Agamemnon's train,
 The son of Atreus, at this hour the chief 300
 Beyond all others under Heav'n renown'd,
 So great a city he hath sack'd, and slain
 Such num'rous foes; but since we reach, at last,
 Thy knees, we beg such hospitable fare,
 Or other gift, as guests are wont to obtain.
 Illustrious lord! respect the Gods, and us
 Thy suitors; suppliants are the care of Jove
 The hospitable; he their wrongs resents,
 And where the stranger sojourns, there is he.

I ceas'd; when answer thus he fierce return'd: 310
 Friend! either thou art fool, or hast arriv'd
 Indeed from far, who bidd'st me fear the Gods,
 Lest they be wroth. The Cyclops little heeds

Jove ægis-arm'd or all the pow'rs of Heav'n.
 Our race is mightier far; nor shall I spare,
 Through fear of Jove's hostility, thyself
 Or thy companions, be not such my choice.
 But tell me now, where touch'd thy gallant bark
 Our country, on thy first arrival here?
 Remote, or nigh? for I would learn the truth. 320

So spake he, tempting me; but artful thus
 I answer'd, penetrating his intent:

My vessel, Neptune, shaker of the shores,
 At yonder utmost promontory dash'd
 In pieces, hurling her against the rocks
 With winds that blew right thither from the sea,
 And I, with these alone, escap'd alive.

So I; to whom, relentless, answer none
 He deign'd; but, with his arms extended, sprang
 Toward my people, of whom two at once 330
 Seizing, like whelps against his cavern-floor
 He dash'd them, and their brains spread all around.
 These, piece-meal hewn, for supper he prepar'd,
 And, like a mountain-lion, neither flesh
 Nor entrails left, nor yet their marrowy bones.
 We, viewing that tremendous sight, uprais'd
 Our hands to Jove, all hope and courage lost.
 When thus the Cyclops had with human flesh
 Fill'd his capacious belly, and had quaff'd
 Much undiluted milk, among his flocks 340
 Outstretch'd immense, he press'd his cavern-floor.
 Me then my courage prompted to approach
 The monster with my glitt'ring falchion drawn,
 And to transfix him where the vitals wrap
 The liver; but maturer thoughts forbade.
 For so we also had incurr'd a death
 Tremendous, wanting pow'r to thrust aside
 The rocky mass, that clos'd his cavern-mouth,
 By force of hand alone. Thus many a sigh 349
 Heaving, we watch'd the dawn. But when, at length,
 Aurora, day-spring's daughter rosy-palm'd,
 Look'd forth, then, kindling fire, his flocks he milk'd
 In order, and her yeanling kid or lamb
 Thrust under each. When thus he had perform'd

His wonted task, two seizing, as before,
He slew them for his next obscene regale.
His breakfast ended, from the cave he drove
His fatted flocks abroad, moving with ease
That pond'rous barrier, and replacing it,
As he had only clos'd a quiver's lid. 360
Then, hissing them along, he drove his flocks
Toward the mountain, and me left, the while
Contemplating how best I might avenge
My friends, and by the aid of Pallas win
Deathless renown. This counsel pleas'd me most.
Beside the sheep-cote lay a massy club,
Hewn by the Cyclops from an olive stock,
Green, but which dried should serve him for a staff.
To us consid'ring it, that staff appear'd
Tall as the mast of a huge trading bark, 370
Impell'd by twenty rowers o'er the Deep.
Such, in our eyes, its length and bulk appear'd.
From this I sever'd, at its tap'ring end,
A fathom's length, and bade my people shave
The scantling smooth. They smooth'd it, and the
while
I gave it point, then sear'd it in the fire,
And cover'd it with ordure of the flocks,
With which the cavern-floor lay thick bespread.
And now commandment for the lots I gave,
Who should with me the pointed brand enforce. 380
When sleep should seize him next, into his eye,
And grind the pupil out. They shook the lots,
And four were chosen, in my own esteem
The worthiest, and myself was chosen fifth.
At eventide he came, his fleecy flocks
Assembling homeward, and compell'd them all
Into his cavern, leaving none abroad,
Either through some surmise, or so inclin'd
By influence haply of the Gods themselves.
The huge rock pull'd into its place again 390
At the cave's mouth, he, sitting, milk'd his sheep
And goats in order, and her kid or lamb
Thrust under each; thus, all his work dispatch'd,
Two more he seiz'd, and to his supper fell.

I then, presenting to his hand a bowl
Of ivy-wood replete with ruddy wine,
Before the Cyclops stood, and thus began :

Lo, Cyclops ! this is wine. Take this and drink
After thy meal of man's flesh. Taste and learn
What precious liquor our lost vessel bore. 400
I brought it for libation, and in hope,
That, mov'd to pity by that sacred rite,
Thou wouldst dismiss us home ; but limits none
Thy fury knows ; what man of all mankind
Shall, after deeds thus lawless, visit *thee* ?

I ceas'd. He took and drank, and hugely pleas'd
With that delicious bev'rage, thus inquir'd :

Give me again, and spare not. Tell me, too,
Thy name, incontinent, that I may make
Requital, gratifying also thee 410
With somewhat to thy taste. We Cyclops own
A bounteous soil, which yields *us* also wine
From clusters nourish'd by the show'rs of Jove ;
But this—O this is from above—a stream
Of nectar and ambrosia, all divine !

He ended, and receiv'd a second draught,
Like measure. Thrice I bore it to his hand,
And, foolish, thrice he drank. But when the fumes
Began to play around the Cyclops' brain,
With show of amity I thus replied : 420

Cyclops ! thou hast my noble name inquir'd,
Which I will tell thee. Give me, in return,
The promis'd boon, some hospitable pledge.
My name is Outis ; Outis I am call'd
At home, abroad, wherever I am known.

So I ; to whom he, savage, thus replied :
Outis, when I have eaten all his friends,
Shall be my last regale. Be that thy boon.

He spake, and, downward sway'd, fell re-supine,
With his huge neck aslant. All-conqu'ring sleep 430
Soon seiz'd him. From his gullet gush'd the wine
With human morsels mingled, many a blast
Sonorous issuing from his glutt'd maw.
Then, thrusting far the spike of olive-wood
Into the embers glowing on the hearth,
I heated it, and cheer'd my friends, the while,

Lest any should, through fear, decline his part.
But when that stake of olive-wood, though green,
Should soon have flam'd, for it was glowing hot,
I bore it to his side. Then all my aids 440
Around me gather'd, and the Gods infus'd
Heroic fortitude into our hearts.
They, grasping the sharp stake of olive-wood,
Infix'd it in his eye; myself, advanc'd
To a superior stand, twirl'd it about.
As when a shipwright with his wimble bores
Tough oaken timber, plac'd on either side
Below, his fellow-artists strain the thong
Alternate, and the restless iron spins,
So, grasping hard the fiery-pointed stake, 450
We twirl'd it in his eye; the bubbling blood
Boil'd round about the brand; his pupil sent
A scalding vapour forth, that sing'd his brow,
And all his eye-roots crackled in the flame.
As when the smith, a hatchet or large axe
Temp'ring immerses all the hissing blade
Deep in cold water (whence the strength of steel),
So hiss'd his eye around the olive-wood.
The howling monster with his outcry fill'd
The hollow rock, and I, with all my aids, 460
Fled terrified. He, plucking forth the spike
From his burnt socket, mad with anguish, cast
The implement all bloody far away.
Then, bellowing, he sounded forth the name
Of ev'ry Cyclops dwelling in the caves
Around him, on the wind-swept mountain-tops;
They, flocking at his cry from ev'ry part,
Circled his den, and of his ail inquir'd.

What ail'st thou, Polypheme, with hideous cries
Troubling the peaceful night, and our repose? 470
Fears't thou to perish, or to lose thy flocks
By force or fraud of rovers o'er the Deep?

Whom thus the Cyclops answer'd from within:
My friends! By fraud of Outis here surpris'd,
By force of Outis here subdu'd, I die.

Then thus with accents wing'd his friends without:
If no man harm thee, but thou art alone,
And sickness feel'st, it is the stroke of Jove,

And thou must bear it; yet invoke for aid
Thy father Neptune, Sov'reign of the floods. 480

So saying, they went, and in my heart I laugh'd,
That by the fiction only of a name,
Slight stratagem! I had deceiv'd them all.

Then groan'd the Cyclops, wrung with pain and
grief,

And, fumbling with stretch'd hands, remov'd the rock
From his cave's mouth; which done, he sat him down,
Spreading his arms athwart the pass, to stop
Our egress with his flocks abroad; so dull,
It seems, he held me, and so ill-advis'd.

I, pondering what means might fittest prove, 490
To save from instant death (if save I might)

My people and myself, to ev'ry shift
Inclin'd, and various counsels fram'd, as one
Who strove for life, with instant death in view.

To me, thus meditating, this appear'd
The likeliest course. The rams well-thriven were,
Thick-fleec'd, full-sized, with wool of sable hue,

These silently with osier twigs, on which
The Cyclops, hideous monster, slept, I bound
Three in one leash; the intermediate rams 500

Bore each a man, whom the exterior two
Preserv'd, concealing him on either side.
Thus each was borne by three, and I, at last,

The curl'd back seizing of a ram (for one
I had reserv'd far stateliest of them all),
Slipp'd underneath his belly, and both hands

Infolding fast in his exub'rant fleece,
Hung by that hold, and press'd the floor supine.
All thus dispos'd, we watch'd with many a sigh

The sacred dawn; but when, at length aris'n, 510
Aurora, day-spring's daughter rosy-palm'd

Again appear'd, the males of all his flocks
Rush'd forth to pasture, and his ewes, the while,
Stood bleating, unreliev'd from the distress

Of udders overcharg'd. He, rack'd with pain
Intolerable, handled, as they stood,
The backs of all, but, in his folly, left
Their bosoms, where we clung, still unexplor'd.

And now (none left beside) the ram approach'd

With his own wool encumber'd and with me, 520
Whom many a fear molested. Polypheme,
The giant, strok'd him as he sat, and said:

My darling ram! why, latest of the flock
Com'st thou, whom never, heretofore, my sheep
Could leave behind, but, stalking at their head,
Thou first was wont to crop the tender grass,
First to arrive at the clear stream, and first
With ready will to seek my sheep-cote here
At ev'ning; but thou com'st now last of all.
Is sorrow for thy master's eye the cause, 530
Pierc'd by the leader of a worthless crew,
Vile as himself, who vanquish'd me with wine,
The vagrant Outis? Him I still believe
Imprison'd here, and couldst thou but assist
Thy master's search, and tell me with a voice
Articulate in what recess conceal'd
He 'scapes my fury now, from side to side
His scatter'd brain should spread my cavern-floor,
And lighter I should feel my wrong receiv'd
From Outis, basely nam'd and nothing-worth. 540

So saying, he left him to pursue the flock.
When, thus drawn forth, we had, at length, escap'd
Few paces from the cavern and the court,
Myself releasing first, my friends I loos'd.
Then, turning seaward many a thriven ewe
Sharp-hoof'd, we drove them swiftly to the ship.
With joyful hearts my people us receiv'd,
Who had escap'd, but much they mourn'd the dead.
I suffer'd not their tears, but silent shook
My brows, by signs commanding them to lift 550
The sheep on board, and instant plough the main.
They, quick embarking, on the benches sat
Well-rang'd, and thresh'd with oars the foamy flood;
But when my distance from the shore was such,
As a loud voice may fly, with bitter taunts
Insulting then the Cyclops, I exclaim'd:

Cyclops! when thou devour'd'st in thy cave
With brutal force my followers, thou devour'd'st
The followers of no timid chief, or base.
Vengeance was sure to recompense that deed 560
Atrocious. Monster! who wast not afraid,

To eat the stranger hous'd beneath thy roof!
Therefore the Gods have well requited thee.

I ended; he, exasp'rate, rag'd the more,
And, rending from its hold a mountain-top,
Hurl'd it toward us; at our vessel's stern
Down came the mass, nigh sweeping in its fall
The rudder's head. The ocean at the plunge
Of that huge rock, high on its reflux flood
Heav'd, irresistible, the ship to land. 570

I, seizing quick our longest pole on board,
Back thrust her from the coast, and, by a nod
In silence giv'n, enjoin'd my crew to ply
Their oars in haste, that so we might escape.
Procumbent, each obey'd, and when the bark
Had twice her former distance interpos'd,
Again I greeted him, although my friends
Earnest dissuaded me on ev'ry side:

Ah, rash Ulysses! why with taunts provoke
The savage more, who hath this moment hurl'd 580
A weapon, such as heav'd the ship again
To land, where death seem'd certain to us all?
For had he heard a cry, or but the voice
Of one man speaking, he had all our heads
With some sharp rock, and all our timbers crush'd
Together, such vast force is in his arm.

So they; but my courageous heart remain'd
Unmov'd, and thus again, incens'd, I spake:

Cyclops! should any man hereafter ask
Who caus'd thy shameful blindness, thus reply— 590
Laertes' son of Ithaca, renown'd
For cities sack'd, Ulysses claims the praise.

I ceas'd, and with a groan thus he replied:
Ah me! an ancient oracle I feel
Accomplish'd. Here abode a prophet erst,
A man of noblest form, and in his art
Unrival'd, Telemus Eurymedes.
He, prophesying to the Cyclops-race,
Grew old among us, and presag'd my loss
Of sight, in future, by Ulysses' hand. 600

I therefore watch'd for the arrival here,
Always, of some great chief, for stature, bulk,
And beauty prais'd, and cloth'd with wondrous might,

But now, a puny dwarf, a wretch beneath
 All prudent fear, subdu'd me first with wine,
 Then blinded me. Come hither, O my guest!
 Return, Ulysses! hospitable cheer
 Awaits thee, and my pray'rs I will prefer
 To glorious Neptune for thy prosp'rous course;
 For I am Neptune's offspring, and the God 610
 Is proud to be my sire; he, if he please,
 And he alone can heal me; none beside
 Of Pow'rs Immortal, or of men below.

He spake; to whom I answer thus return'd:
 I would that of thy life amerc'd as sure
 I could dismiss thee to the shades, as none—
 Not Neptune's self shall sight restore to thee.

So I; then pray'd the Cyclops to his sire,
 With hands uprais'd toward the starry Heav'n: 619

Hear, Ocean's Sov'reign! Neptune azure-hair'd!
 If I indeed am thine, and if thou boast
 Thyself my father, grant that never more
 Laertes' son of Ithaca, renown'd
 For cities sack'd, Ulysses, reach his home.
 But should the fates ordain, that he behold
 Once more his home, his country, and his friends,
 Late, in distress, on board a foreign bark,
 All his companions lost, may he arrive,
 Nor find his mis'ries ended even there.

He spake; whose imprecation Neptune heard. 630
 Then lifting from the shore a stone of size
 Still more unwieldy, with enormous force
 He whirl'd it round, and launch'd it from his hand.
 Behind my sable bark the burden fell,
 Threat'ning the rudder's head. Huge rose the waves
 Under concussion of the plunging rock,
 And well-nigh wafted us at once to land.

But when we reach'd the isle where we had left
 Our num'rous barks, and where my people sat
 Watching with ceaseless sorrow our return, 640
 We thrust our vessel to the sandy shore,
 Then disembark'd, and of the Cyclops' sheep
 Gave equal share to all. To me alone
 My fellow-voyagers the ram consign'd
 In distribution, my peculiar meed.

Him to the cloud-girt Sov'reign over all
 Devoting, on the shore his thighs I burn'd.
 But adverse Jove, designing, even then,
 The wreck of all my galleys, and the death
 Of all my followers, heeded not the gift. 650
 Thus, feasting largely, on the shore we sat
 Till even-tide, and quaffing gen'rous wine;
 But when the sun was set, and darkness fell,
 Then on the shore we slept; and when again
 Aurora, rosy daughter of the dawn,
 Look'd forth, I bade my people, casting loose
 Without delay their moorings, climb the barks.
 They all obedient, took their seats on board
 Well-rang'd, and thresh'd with oars the foamy flood.
 Thus, happy to escape, though sad for those, 660
 Whom we had lost, we roam'd the Deep again.

WE came to the Ithacan island, where dwell
 Echius, son of Ithymus, before the town
 By the harbour, in an isle almost
 A private wall surrounded, and a narrow
 Of steep ascent, and vision is around.
 Twelve are his children, in his palace born,
 Six sons, and daughters; and his daughters six
 To his six sons he married, and his sons
 They with their fathers hold perpetual feasts,
 And with their royal mother, still supplied
 With dainties numberless, the supping hours
 Is fill'd with song and dance all the day,
 And with their consort guests at night they sleep.
 On stately couches with rich arras spread
 Their city and their splendid courts surround.
 A month complete he, Echius, at his board
 Regal'd me, and inquiry made minute
 Of Ulysses' fall, of the Achæan loss,
 And of our voyage thence. I told him all
 But now, desirous to unmask again,

BOOK X.

Argument.

Ulysses, in pursuit of his narrative, relates his arrival at the island of Æolus, his departure thence, and the unhappy occasion of his return thither. The monarch of the wind dismisses him at last with much asperity. He next tells us of his arrival among the Læstrygonians, by whom his whole fleet, together with their crews, are destroyed, his own ship and crew excepted. Thence he is driven to the island of Circe. By her the half of his people are transformed into swine. Assisted by Mercury, he resists her enchantments himself, and prevails with the Goddess to recover them to their former shape. In consequence of Circe's instructions, after having spent a complete year in her palace, he prepares for a voyage to the infernal regions.

WE came to the Æolian isle; there dwells
Æolus, son of Hippotas, belov'd
By the Immortals, in an isle afloat.
A brazen wall force-proof, and smoothest rocks
Of steep ascent, environ it around.
Twelve are his children, in his palace born,
Six sons, six daughters; and his daughters six
To his six sons by nuptial rites he join'd.
They with their father hold perpetual feast,
And with their royal mother, still supplied 10
With dainties numberless; the sounding dome
Is fill'd with sav'ry odours all the day,
And with their consorts chaste at night they sleep
On stateliest couches with rich arras spread.
Their city and their splendid courts we reach'd.
A month complete he, friendly, at his board
Regal'd me, and inquiry made minute
Of Ilium's fall, of the Achaian fleet,
And of our voyage thence. I told him all.
But now, desirous to embark again, 20

I ask'd dismissal home, which he approv'd,
And well provided for my prosp'rous course.
He gave me, furnish'd by a bullock flay'd
In his ninth year, a bag; ev'ry rude blast
Which from its bottom turns the Deep, that bag
Imprison'd held; for him Saturnian Jove
Hath offic'd arbiter of all the winds,
To rouse their force, or calm them, at his will.
He gave me them on board my bark, so bound
With silver twine, that not a breath escap'd, 50
Then order'd gentle Zephyrus abroad,
To speed us homeward. Order vain, alas!
So fatal prov'd the folly of my friends.

Nine days continual, night and day we sail'd,
And on the tenth my native land appear'd.
Not far remote my Ithacans I saw
Fires kindling on the coast; but worn with toil
And watchful care me gentle sleep subdu'd;
For constant I had rul'd the helm, nor giv'n
That charge to any, fearful of delay. 40

Then, in close conference my crew bespake
Each other, and, he carries home, they said,
Silver and gold from Æolus receiv'd,
Son of the valiant Hippotas; and thus
A seaman murmuring, the rest harangu'd:

Ye Gods! what city or what lands soe'er
Ulysses visits, how is he belov'd
By all, and honour'd! many precious spoils
He homeward bears from Troy; but we return,
Partners of all his perils by the way, 50
With thriftless hands. Now also he hath gain'd
This pledge of friendship from the king of winds.
But come—be quick—search we the bag, and learn
What stores of gold and silver it contains.

So he, whose mischievous advice prevail'd.
They loos'd the bag; forth issu'd all the winds,
And, rapt by tempests back, with fruitless tears
They mourn'd their native country lost again.
Just then awaking, in my troubled mind
I doubted, whether from the vessel's side, 60
To plunge and perish, or, with patient mind,
To suffer and to live. The suff'rer's part

At length I chose, and resolute surviv'd.
 But, with my mantle wrapp'd around my brows,
 I laid me down, till, hurried by the blast,
 We, groaning, reach'd again th' Æolian isle.

First, from refreshing streams our barks we stor'd,
 Then, my companions at their galley's sides
 All seated, took repast; short meal we made,
 When, with a herald and a chosen friend, 70
 The hall of Æolus once more I sought.
 Him banquetting with all his sons we found,
 And with his consort. Ent'ring, down we sat
 All on the threshold, whom astonish'd they
 Beheld, and of our coming thus inquir'd:

Return'd? Ulysses! by what adverse Pow'r
 Repuls'd, hast thou arriv'd? we sent thee forth
 Well-fitted to regain thy native isle,
 Or soon to reach what port soe'er thou wouldst.

So they—to whom, heart-broken, I replied: 80
 My base companions, and the traitor, Sleep,
 Alike are culpable; but, O my friends!
 Redress the mischief, for the pow'r is yours.

So I their favour woo'd. Mute sat the sons,
 But thus the father answer'd: Hence—begone—
 Thou worst of men! I may not entertain
 Or give safe conduct homeward to a wretch
 Abhorr'd by all in Heav'n. Haste—leave the isle,
 For hated by the Gods hast thou arriv'd.

He said, and sent me sorrowing from the gate. 90
 Thence, therefore, wearied at the toilsome oar,
 Through our own folly, and with mournful hearts,
 We plough'd the Deep, no longer hoping aid,
 From Æolus, of winds to waft us home.

Six days we navigated, day and night,
 The briny flood, and on the seventh arriv'd
 At lofty Læstrygonia, city built
 By Lamus, for its distant gates renown'd.

The herdsman there, his cattle driving home, 99
 Calls forth the shepherd; there th' industrious swain,
 Renouncing sleep, may double wages earn,
 Attending both; for when the flocks forsake
 At even tide the pastures, which they range
 Throughout the fervid day, the cooler hours

Nocturnal to the grazing herds belong.
 To that capacious port we came, by rocks
 Uninterrupted flank'd on either side
 Of tow'ring height, while prominent the shores
 And bold, converging at the haven's mouth,
 Leave narrow pass. We push'd our galleys in, 110
 Then moor'd them side by side; for never surge
 There lifts its head, or great or small, but clear
 We found, and motionless, the shelter'd flood.
 I only, stationing my bark without,
 Secur'd her well with hawsers to a rock
 At the land's point, then climb'd the rugged steep,
 And stood to spy the country. Labours none
 Of men or oxen in the land appear'd,
 Nor aught beside saw we, but from the Earth
 Smoke rising, therefore of my friends I sent 120
 Two well-selected, with a herald, third,
 To learn, what race of men that country fed.
 Departing, they an even track pursu'd,
 Made by the waggons bringing timber down
 From the high mountains to the town below.
 Ere yet they reach'd the city, on the way
 A damsel met them bearing forth an ew'r
 The daughter of Antiphatas, the king,
 Descending to the crystal fountain nam'd
 Artacia, whence the city was supplied. 130
 Approaching they accosted her, and ask'd
 What king reign'd there, and over whom he reign'd.
 She, prompt and pleas'd, soon taught them how to find
 Her father's house, where ent'ring, they beheld,
 And shudder'd at the sight, a woman, huge
 And hideous, like a mountain's tow'ring head.
 She, seeing them, from council instant call'd
 Her spouse Antiphatas, who teeming came
 With dreadful purposes, and of the three
 Seiz'd one, whom crush'd and broken he devour'd.
 With headlong terrour the surviving two 141
 Fled to the ships. Then sent the ruthless king
 Loud proclamation forth, and, at the sound,
 From side to side of all the city, fierce
 And countless, stalk'd the Læstrygonian host,
 Gigantic forms, not human. From the rocks

Huge stones, a strong man's burden each, they cast ;
And, terrible, at once a mingled sound
Of shatter'd ships and dying men arose, 149
Whom spear'd like fishes to their home they bore,
A loathsome prey. While them within the port
They slaughter'd, I (the falchion at my side
Drawn forth) cut loose the hawsers of my ship,
And all my crew enjoin'd, with bosoms laid
Prone on their oars, to fly the threaten'd wo.
They, dreading instant death, tugg'd re-supine
Together, and my galley from beneath
Those beetling rocks into the open sea
Shot gladly ; but the rest all perish'd there.

Proceeding thence, we sigh'd and roam'd the waves,
Glad that we liv'd, but sorrowing for the slain. 160
We came to the Ææan isle; there dwelt
Circe, dread Goddess, skill'd in magic song,
Sister of sage Æætes; them the sun,
Bright luminary of the world, begat
On Perse, daughter of Oceanus.
Our vessel silently we grounded there
Within a spacious haven, thither led
By some celestial Pow'r. We disembark'd,
And on the coast two days and nights entire 170
Extended lay, with labour worn, and each
The victim of his heart-devouring woes.
Then with my spear and with my falchion arm'd,
I left the ship to climb with hasty steps
An airy height, thence hoping to espy
Some works of man, or hear, perchance, a voice.
Exalted on a rough rock's craggy point
I stood, and on the distant plain, beheld
Smoke, which from Circe's palace through the gloom
Of trees and thickets rose. That smoke discern'd,
I ponder'd next if thither I should haste, 181
Seeking intelligence. Long time I mus'd,
But chose at last, as my discreeter course,
To seek the sea-beach and my bark again;
And, when my crew had eaten, to dispatch
Before me others, who should first inquire.
But, ere I yet had reach'd my gallant bark,
Some God, with pity viewing me alone

In that untrodden solitude, sent forth
An antler'd stag full-siz'd into my way. 190

His woodland pastures left, he sought the stream,
For he was thirsty and already parch'd
By the sun's heat. Him issuing from his haunt,
Sheer through the back beneath his middle spine
I wounded, and the lance sprang forth beyond.
Moaning he fell, and in the dust expir'd.

Then, treading on his breathless trunk, I pluck'd
My weapon forth, which leaving there reclin'd,
I tore away the osiers with my hands
And sallogs green, and to a fathom's length 200

Twisting the gather'd twigs into a band,
Bound fast the feet of my enormous prey,
And, slinging him athwart my neck, repair'd
Toward my sable bark, propp'd on my lance,
Which now to carry shoulder'd as before
Surpass'd my power, so bulky was the load.

Arriving at the ship, I there let fall
My burden, and, assembling on the beach
My people, thus their drooping spirits cheer'd :
Rejoice, my friends! We shall not, though dis-
tress'd, 210

Seek Pluto's realm, till thither sent by Fate.
Come—we will banquet now, not die consum'd
With famine, wanting neither food nor wine.

I spake; at once obedient from the ground,
Their folded brows unmantling, all arose,
And with admiring eyes (for of a bulk
To be admir'd was he) the stag survey'd,
Till having gaz'd their fill, their hands they lav'd,
And preparation made of noble cheer.

That day complete, till set of sun, we spent 220
Feasting deliciously without restraint,

And quaffing gen'rous wine; but when the sun
Went down, and darkness overshadow'd all,

Extended then on Ocean's bank we lay;
And when Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
Look'd rosy forth, convening all my crew
To council, I arose, and thus began :

My fellow-voyagers, however worn
With num'rous hardships, hear! for neither West

Know we, nor East, where rises, or where sets 230
The all-enlight'ning sun. But let us think
If thought perchance may profit us, of which
Small hope I see; for when I lately climb'd
Yon craggy rock, I saw that we had reach'd
An isle encircled by the boundless Deep;
Flat lies the land, and in the midst I mark'd
Dun smoke ascending from an oaken bow'r.

I spake, whom they with hearts half-broken heard,
Recalling fell Antiphatas to mind,
The Læstrygonian, and the Cyclops' deeds, 240
Ferocious feeder on the flesh of man.

Aloud they wept; fast flow'd the tears of each;
But neither tears nor cries avail'd them aught.

Then, separating all my valiant friends
In equal portions, I assign'd a chief
To either band, myself to these, to those
Godlike Eurylochus. This done, we cast
The lots into the helmet, and at once
Forth sprang the lot of bold Eurylochus.

He went, and with him of my people march'd 250
Twenty and two; they sorrowing to depart,
Nor we less mourning to be left behind.

Low in a vale, but on an open spot,
They found the splendid house of Circe, built
With polish'd stones and compass'd all around
By lions, on all sides and mountain-wolves,
Tam'd by herself with drugs of noxious pow'rs.
Nor were they mischievous, but as my friends
Approach'd, arising on their hinder feet,
Paw'd them in blandishment, and wagg'd the tail. 260

As when from feast he rises, dogs around
Their master fawn, accustom'd to receive
Some soothing gift from his familiar hand,
Around my people so those talon'd wolves
And lions fawn'd. They, terrified, that troop
Of savage monsters horrible beheld.

And now, before the Goddess' gates arriv'd,
They heard the voice of Circe singing sweet
Within, while, busied at the loom, she wove
An ample web immortal, such a work 270
Transparent, graceful, and of bright design,

As hands of Goddesses alone produce.

Thus then Polites, prince of men, the friend
Highest in my esteem, the rest bespake :

My friends ! some damsel or some Goddess weaves
An ample web within, and strikes, the while,
With such melodious strains the marble walls,
That all the palace rings. Haste—Call aloud.

He ceas'd ; they call'd ; soon issuing at the sound,
The Goddess open'd wide her splendid gates, 280
And bade them in ; they, heedless, all complied,
All save Eurylochus, who fear'd a snare.

She, introducing them, conducted each
To a bright throne, then gave them Pramnian wine,
With grated cheese, pure meal, and honey new,
But medicated with her pois'nous drugs
Their food, that in oblivion they might lose
The wish of home. She gave them, and they drank,—
When, smiting each with her enchanting wand,
She shut them in her sties. In head, in voice, 290
In body, and in bristles they became
All swine, yet intellect'd as before.

There Circe shut them all, who weeping fed
On acorns, chesnuts, and the cornel-fruit,
Food grateful ever to the grov'ling swine.

Back flew Eurylochus toward the ship,
To tell the woful tale ; struggling to speak,
Yet speechless, there he stood, his heart transfix'd
With anguish, and his eyes with tears replete.
Me boding terrors occupied. At length, 300
When, gazing on him, all had oft inquir'd,
He thus rehears'd to us the dreadful change :

Renown'd Ulysses ! as thou bad'st, we went
Through yonder oaks ! imbosom'd in a vale,
But built conspicuous on a swelling knoll
With polish'd rock, we found a stately dome.
Within, some Goddess or some woman wove
An ample web, and caroll'd sweet the while.
They call'd aloud ; she, issuing at the voice,
Unfolded soon her splendid portals wide, 310
And bade them in. Heedless they enter'd, all ;
But I remain'd, suspicious of a snare.
Exelong the whole band vanish'd, none I saw

Thenceforth, though, seated there, long time I
watch'd.

He ended; I my studded falchion huge
Athwart my shoulder cast, and seiz'd my bow,
Then bade him lead me thither by the way
Himself had gone; but with both hands my knees
He clasp'd, and in wing'd accents sad exclaim'd:

My king! ah lead me not unwilling back, 320
But leave me here; for confident I judge,
That neither thou wilt bring another thence,
Nor come thyself again. Haste—fly we swift
With these, for we, at least, may yet escape.

So he; to whom this answer I return'd:
Eurylochus! abiding here, eat thou
And drink thy fill beside the sable bark;
I go; necessity forbids my stay.

So saying, I left the galley and the shore.
But ere yet, travelling that gloomy vale, 330
I reach'd the palace where th' enchantress dwelt,
Hermes, possessor of the golden wand,
Met me. Some stripling in his prime he seem'd,
His cheeks cloth'd newly with their earliest down,
For youth is then most graceful; fast he lock'd
His hand in mine, and thus familiar spake:

Unhappy! whither, wand'ring o'er the hills,
Stranger to all this region, and alone,
Go'st thou? Thy people are within the walls
Of Circe prison'd, where as swine in sties 340
She keeps them. Com'st thou to release thy friends?
I tell thee, never wilt thou thence return
Thyself, but wilt be prison'd with the rest.
Yet hearken—I will disappoint her wiles,
And will preserve thee. Take this precious drug;
This holding, enter thou the Goddess' house
Boldly, for it shall save thy life from harm.
Lo! I reveal to thee the cruel arts
Of Circe; learn them. She will mix for thee
A potion, and will also drug thy food 350
With noxious herbs; but she shall not prevail
By all her pow'r to change thee; for the force
Superiour of this noble plant, my gift,
Shall baffle her. Hear still what I advise.

When she shall smite thee with her slender rod,
 With falchion drawn and with death-threat'ning looks
 Rush on her; terrified, to her embrace
 She will invite thee; neither thou refuse
 The Goddess' offer'd love, secure to win
 Deliv'rance for thy friends, and for thyself 360
 Reception kind and bounteous in return.
 But force her swear the dreaded oath of Heav'n,
 That she will other mischief none devise
 Against thee, lest she strip thee of thy might,
 And, quenching all thy virtue, make thee vile.

So spake propitious Hermes, and the drug
 Pluck'd from the soil to my possession gave,
 With knowledge of its pow'rs. The root was black,
 Milk-white the blossom; moly is its name,
 In Heav'n; not easily by mortal man 370
 Dug forth, but all is easy to the Gods.
 Then Hermes through the island-woods repair'd
 To Heav'n, and I to Circe's dread abode,
 In gloomy musings busied as I went.
 Within the vestibule arriv'd, where dwelt
 The beauteous Goddess, staying there my steps,
 I call'd aloud; she sudden at the voice
 Appearing, threw the splendid portals wide,
 And bade me in; I sorrowful obey'd.

She plac'd me on an argent-studded throne 380
 Foot-stool'd beneath, and for my drink prepar'd
 The Pramnian mixture in a golden cup,
 Impregnating, on my destruction bent,
 With noxious herbs the draught. I drain'd secure
 And unimpair'd the goblet; when, incens'd,
 She smote me with her wand, and thus exclaim'd:

Now seek the sty. There wallow with thy friends.
 She spake; I drawing from beside my thigh
 My falchion keen, with death-denouncing looks
 Rush'd on her; she with screams of terrour ran 390
 Beneath my lifted arm, seiz'd fast my knees,
 And in wing'd accents plaintive thus began:

Who? whence? thy city and thy birth declare.
 Amaz'd I see thee with that potion drench'd,
 Yet unenchanted; never man before
 Once pass'd it through his lips, and liv'd the same;

But in thy breast a mind inhabits, proof
 Against all charms. Come then—I know thee well.
 Thou art Ulysses versatile and shrewd,
 Of whose arrival here, in his return 400
 From Ilium, Hermes of the golden wand
 Was ever wont to tell me. Sheath again
 Thy sword, and let us, on my bed reclin'd,
 Mutual embrace, that we may trust thenceforth
 Each other, without jealousy or fear.

The Goddess spake, to whom I thus replied:
 O Circe! canst thou bid me meek become
 And gentle, who beneath thy roof detain'st
 My fellow-voyagers transform'd to swine?
 And, fearing my escape, invit'st thou me, 410
 To share thy couch, with fraudulent design
 First to unarm, and to unman me next?
 No—trust me—never will I share thy bed,
 Till first, O Goddess, thou consent to swear
 The dread all-binding oath, that other harm
 Against myself thou wilt imagine none.

I spake, and, undelaying, she complied.
 When, therefore, nought of all her solemn oath
 Unsworn remain'd, I climb'd her stately bed.
 Four graceful nymphs, mean time, their household
 trust 420

Administ'ring, the palace briskly pac'd,
 Her menials, from the fountains sprung and groves,
 And from the sacred streams that seek the sea.
 Of these one cast fine linen on the thrones,
 Which next with purple arras rich she spread;
 Bright silver stands with golden dishes charg'd
 Before the gorgeous thrones another plac'd,
 The third an argent beaker fill'd with wine
 Delicious, which in golden cups she serv'd; 429
 The fourth brought water, which she warm'd within
 An ample vase, and, when the simm'ring flood
 Sang in the tripod, led me to a bath,
 And lav'd me with the pleasant stream profuse
 Pour'd o'er my neck and body, till my limbs,
 Refresh'd, all sense of lassitude resign'd.
 When she had bath'd me, and with limpid oil
 Anointed me, and cloth'd me in a vest

And mantle, next she led me to a throne
 Of royal state, with silver studs emboss'd,
 And footstool'd soft beneath; then came a nymph, 440
 With golden ewer charg'd and silver bowl,
 Who pour'd pure water on my hands, and plac'd
 The shining stand before me, which with food
 Various, selected from her present stores,
 The cat'ress spread; then courteous bade me eat.
 But me it pleas'd not; with far other thoughts
 My spirit teem'd, on vengeance more intent.
 Soon then as Circe mark'd me on my seat
 Fast-rooted, sullen, nor with outstretch'd hands
 Deigning to touch the banquet, she approach'd, 450
 And in wing'd accents suasive thus began:

Why sits Ulysses like the dumb, dark thoughts
 His only food? loathes he the touch of meat,
 And taste of wine? Thou fear'st, as I perceive,
 Some other snare, but idle is that fear,
 For I have sworn th' inviolable oath.

She ceas'd; to whom this answer I return'd:
 How can I eat? what virtuous man and just,
 O Circe! could endure the taste of wine,
 Or food, till he should see his prison'd friends 460
 Once more at liberty? If then thy wish,
 That I should eat and drink, be true, restore
 My lov'd companions to these eyes again.

So I; then Circe, bearing in her hand
 Her potent rod, went forth, and op'ning wide
 The sty, drove thence my friends, none smaller-siz'd
 Than after nine years' growth the pamper'd brawn.
 They stood before me; she through all the herd
 Proceeding, each anointed with a charm
 Of other pow'rs, and at the wholesome touch 470
 All shed the swinish bristles by the drug,
 Dread Circe's former magic gift, produc'd.
 Restor'd at once to manhood, they appear'd
 More vig'rous far and sightlier than before.
 Conscious of me, they seiz'd with tender grasp
 Their leader's hands. Tears follow'd, but of joy,
 And with loud cries the vaulted palace rang.
 Even the awful Goddess felt, herself,
 Compassion, and, approaching me, began:

Laertes' noble son, for wiles renown'd ! 480
 Hence to the shore, and to thy gallant bark ;
 First hale her safe aground, then, hiding all
 Your arms and treasures in the caverns, come
 Thyself again, and hither lead thy friends.

So spake the Goddess, and my gen'rous mind
 Persuaded ; thence repairing to the beach,
 I sought my ship ; arriv'd, I found my crew
 Lamenting miserably, and their cheeks
 With tears bedewing ceaseless at her side.

As when the calves within some village rear'd 490
 Behold at eve the herd returning home
 From fruitful meads, where they have graz'd their
 fill,

Forth rushing from the stall they blare and sport
 Around their mothers with a ceaseless joy ;
 Such joy, at sight of me, dissolv'd in tears
 My grateful friends, and each his spirit felt
 With like affections warm'd as he had reach'd
 At length his country, and his city seen,
 Fair Ithaca, where he was born and rear'd.

Then in wing'd accents tender thus they spake : 500

Noble Ulysses ! thy appearance fills
 Our soul with transports, such as we should feel
 Arriv'd in safety on our native shore.

But speak—how perish'd our unhappy friends ?

So they ; when, cheering them, I thus replied :
 Hale ye the vessel first ashore, and hide
 In caverns all our treasures and our arms :
 Then haste to follow me, and ye shall soon
 Behold your happy friends, beneath the roof
 Of Circe banquetting and drinking wine, 510
 For dearth of nought with her they feel or fear.

So I ; whom all with readiness obey'd,
 All save Eurylochus ; he sought alone
 To stay the rest, and eager interpos'd :

Ah whither tend we, miserable men ?
 Why covet ye this evil, to go down
 To Circe's palace ? she will change us all
 To lions, wolves, or swine, that we may guard
 Her palace ! by necessity constrain'd.

So some were pris'ners of the Cyclops erst, 520

When, led by rash Ulysses, our lost friends
Intruded needlessly into his cave,
And perish'd by the folly of their chief.

He spake; whom hearing, half-resolv'd I stood
With my keen falchion from beside me drawn,
To tumble his lopp'd head into the dust,
Although he were my kinsman in the bonds
Of close affinity; but all my friends,
As with one voice, thus gently interpos'd :

Our noble chief! command that he remain 530
Our vessel's guard, while we thy steps attend,
That shall conduct us where the Goddess dwells.

So saying, they left the galley, and set forth
Climbing the coast; nor would Eurylochus
Beside the hollow bark remain, but join'd
His comrades, by my dreadful menace aw'd.
Circe the while my friends, her happy guests,
Had nought neglected, but to each had giv'n
Warm bath, smooth unction, vest, and fleecy cloak,
And feasting, when we came, we found them all. 540
They met, they greeted, and, the wondrous tale
Of transformation told, all wept aloud
Till the wide dome resounded. Then approach'd
The graceful Goddess, and address'd me thus :

Laertes' noble son, for wiles renown'd!
Provoke ye not each other, now, to tears.
I am not ignorant, myself, how dread
Have been your woes, both on the fishy Deep,
And on the land by force of hostile pow'rs.
But come—Eat now, and drink ye wine, that so 550
Your freshen'd spirit may revive, and ye
Like courage feel again, as when ye left
The rugged shores of Ithaca, your home.
For now, through recollection, day by day,
Of all your pains and toils, ye are become
Exhausted, strengthless, and a cheerful mind
Know never, such have been your num'rous woes.

She spake; whose invitation kind prevail'd,
And won us to her will. There then we dwelt
The year complete, with sav'ry viands fed 560
Day after day, and quaffing gen'rous wine.
But when, the year with all its waning moons

And tedious days fulfill'd, another year
Its circling course began, my faithful friends
Then summon'd me abroad, and thus they said:

Sir! recollect thy country, if indeed
Propitious fate ordain thee to behold
Thy native shores and high-built home again.

So they; whose admonition I receiv'd
Well-pleas'd. Then all the day regal'd we sat 570
At Circe's board with sav'ry viands rare,
And quaffing richest wine; but when, the sun
Declining, darkness overshadow'd all,
Then each within the dusky palace took
Custom'd repose, and to the Goddess' bed
Magnificent ascending, there I urg'd
My earnest suit, which gracious she receiv'd,
And in wing'd accents earnest thus I spake:

O Circe! let us prove thy promise true;
Dismiss us hence. My own desires at length, 580
Tend homeward vehement, and the desires
No less of all my friends, who with complaints,
By thee unwitness'd, wear my heart away,

So I; to whom the Goddess in return:
Laertes' noble son, Ulysses, fam'd
For deepest wisdom! dwell not longer here,
Thou and thy followers, in my abode
Reluctant; but your next must be a course
Far diff'rent; hence departing, ye must seek
The dreary house of Ades, and of dread 590
Persephone, that ye may there consult
Theban Tiresias, prophet blind, but blest
With faculties which death itself hath spar'd,
On whom alone Persephone bestows
A mind prophetic, while all others flit
Mere forms, the shadows of what once they were.

She spake; whose awful tidings I receiv'd
Heart-broken; weeping on the bed I sat,
Reckless of life and of the light of day.
But when, with tears and rolling to and fro 600
Sate, I felt relief, I thus replied:

O Circe! with what guide shall I perform
This voyage, unperform'd by living man?

I spake, when instantly the Goddess thus—

Brave Laertiades ! let not the fear
 To want a guide distress thee. Once on board,
 Your mast erected, and your shining sail
 Unfurl'd, sit thou ; the breathing North shall waft
 Thy vessel on. But when ye shall have cross'd
 The broad expanse of Ocean, and shall reach 610
 The oozy shore, where grow the poplar groves
 And fruitless willows wan of Proserpine,
 Push thither through the gulfy Deep thy bark,
 And landing, haste to Pluto's murky abode.
 There into Acheron runs not alone
 Dread Pyriphlegethon, but Cocytus loud,
 From Styx deriv'd ; there also stands a rock,
 At whose broad base the roaring rivers meet.
 There thrusting, as I bid, thy bark ashore,
 O hero ! scoop a trench, in length and breadth 620
 A measured cubit, and libation pour
 Around, for all the nations of the Dead ;
 First milk with honey mix'd, then luscious wine,
 Then water, sprinkling last meal over all.
 Next offer supplication to the forms
 And shadows of the Dead, and vow to slay
 In thy own palace, shouldst thou safe return,
 A heifer, fairest of thy num'rous herds,
 And to enrich unsparingly the pyre
 With delicacies such as please the shades ; 630
 But in peculiar to Tiresias vow
 A ram all sable, and of noblest size.
 When thus thou hast propitiated with pray'r
 All the illustrious nations of the dead,
 Slay for them next in sacrifices a ram
 And sable ewe, turning the face of each
 Right toward Erebus, and look thyself
 Mean time askance toward the river's course.
 Souls num'rous soon of the departed dead
 Will thither flock ; then strenuous urge thy friends,
 Flaying the victims, which thy ruthless steel 641
 Hath slain, to burn them, and to sooth by pray'r
 Illustrious Pluto and dread Proserpine.
 While thus is done, thou, seated at the foss,
 Falchion in hand, chase thence the airy forms

Afar, nor suffer them to approach the blood,
 Till with Tiresias thou have first conferr'd.
 Then, glorious chief ! the prophet shall himself
 Appear, who will instruct thee, and thy course
 Delineate, measuring from place to place 650
 Thy whole return athwart the fishy flood.

While thus she spake, the golden dawn arose,
 When, putting on me my attire, the nymph
 Next cloth'd herself, and girding to her waist
 With an embroider'd zone her snowy robe
 Graceful, redundant, veil'd her beauteous head.
 Then, ranging the wide palace, I arous'd
 My followers, standing at the side of each—

Up ! sleep no longer ! let us quick depart,
 For so the Goddess hath herself advis'd. 660

So I, whose early summons my brave friends
 With readiness obey'd. Yet even thence
 I brought not all my crew. There was a youth,
 Youngest of all my train, Elpenor ; one
 Not much in estimation for desert
 In arms, not prompt in understanding more,
 Who, seeking cooler air, which overcharg'd
 With wine he needed, on the palace roof
 Of Circe slept, apart from all the rest.

Awaken'd by the clamour of my friends 670
 Newly arisen, he also sprang to rise,
 And, in his haste, forgetful where to find
 The deep-descending stairs, plung'd through the
 roof.

That shock his neck-bone, parting at the joint,
 Sustain'd not, and his spirit sought the shades.

Then thus to my assembling friends I spake :
 Ye think, I doubt not, of a homeward course ;
 But Circe points me to the drear abode
 Of Proserpine and Pluto, to consult
 The spirit of Tiresias, Theban seer. 680

I ceas'd, and they those awful tidings heard
 Heart-broken ; down they sat, lamenting loud
 Their mournful lot and plucking each his hair ;
 Yet profit none of all their sorrow found.

But while we sought my galley on the beach,

With aching hearts and ever-flowing tears,
 Circe, the while, descended to the shore,
 That she might bind beside the bark a ram
 And sable ewe, but pass'd us unperceiv'd;
 For who, when they consent not to be seen, 690
 Can see the Gods, what way soe'er they move.

BOOK XI.

Argument.

Ulysses relates to Alcinous his voyage to the infernal regions, his conference there with the prophet Tiresias concerning his return to Ithaca, and gives him an account of the heroes, heroines, and others whom he saw there.

WE reach'd the ship, which haling downward first
Into the sacred Deep, we plac'd on board
Her mast and sails, the ram and sable ewe,
Then enter'd, weeping and distress'd ourselves.
And now, melodious Circe, nymph divine,
Sent after us a canvass-stretching breeze,
Pleasant companion of our course, and we
(The tackle one adjusted) on the seats
Reposing, needed but the pilot's aid.
All day, with sails distended, o'er the Deep 10
She flew, and when the sun at length declin'd,
And twilight dim had shadow'd all the ways,
Approach'd the bourn of Ocean's vast profound.
The city there of the Cimmerians stands
With clouds and darkness veil'd, on whom the sun
Deigns not to look with his beam-darting eye,
Or when he climbs the starry arch, or when
Earthward he slopes again his west'ring wheels.
But sad night canopies the woful race.
We hal'd the bark aground, and, landing there 20
The ram and sable ewe, beside the brink
Of Ocean journey'd whither Circe bade.
Eurylochus and Perimedes here
The victims held, while with my falchion drawn
I scoop'd a hollow trench in measur'd length
And breadth a cubit, and libation pour'd
Around for all the nations of the Dead,

First milk with honey mix'd, then luscious wine,
Then water; sprinkling last meal over all.

This done, adoring the unreal forms 30

And shadows of the dead, I vow'd to slay

In my own palace, should I safe return,

A heifer fairest of my num'rous herds,

And to enrich unsparingly the pyre

With delicacies, such as please the shades.

But in peculiar to the Theban seer

I vow'd in size superiour to the rest

A sable ram. When thus I had implor'd

With vows and pray'r the nations of the dead,

Piercing the victims next, I turn'd them both 40

To bleed into the trench; then swarming came

From Erebus the shades of the deceas'd,

Brides, youths unwedded, seniors who had liv'd

Long time familiar with oppressive cares,

And girls, afflicted never till they died.

Came also num'rous warriors by the spear

In battle pierc'd, with armour gore-distain'd,

And stalk'd in multitudes around the foss.

With dreadful clamours; me pale horror seiz'd.

Then all in haste I importun'd my friends, 50

Flaying the victims which myself had slain,

To burn them, and to supplicate in pray'r

Illustrious Pluto and dread Proserpine.

I sat the while, and with my falchion drawn

Forbade the thronging ghosts to approach the blood,

Till with Tiresias I should first confer.

The spirit first of my companion came,

Elpenor; for no burial honours yet

Had he receiv'd, but we had left his corse

In Circe's palace, tombless, undeplor'd, 60

Ourselves by pressure urg'd of other cares.

Him seeing, with compassion touch'd I wept,

And in wing'd accents of his fate inquir'd:

Elpenor! how cam'st thou into the realms

Of darkness? Hast thou, though on foot, so far

Outstripp'd my speed, who in my bark arrived?

So I; to whom with tears he thus replied:

Laertes' noble son, for wiles renown'd!

Fool'd by some demon and the intemp'rate bowl,

I perish'd in the house of Circe; there, 70
 Forgetful of the deep-descending steps,
 I fell precipitated from the roof.

That shock my neck-bone, parting at the joint,
 Sustain'd not, and my spirit sought the shades.
 But now, by those whom thou hast left at home,
 By thy Penelope, and by thy sire,
 The gentle guardian of thine infant years,
 And by thy only son Telemachus,
 I now adjure; for full well I know,

That, from the house of Pluto safe return'd, 80
 Thou shalt erelong thy gallant vessel moor
 At the Ææan isle. Ah! there arriv'd,
 Remember me, nor leave me undeplor'd
 And uninhum'd, lest vengeance, for my sake,
 Attend thee from the Gods; but burn my corse
 With whatsoever arms I left, and raise
 A kind memorial of me on the shore.
 Heap'd high with earth; that an unhappy man
 May yet enjoy an unforgotten name.

Thus do at my request, and on my hill 90
 Funereal fix erect the polish'd oar,
 With which among my friends I lately row'd.

He spake; to whom thus answer I return'd:
 Poor youth! I will perform thy whole desire.

Thus we, there sitting, doleful converse held.
 I, stretching my bright falchion o'er the blood,
 And my companion's shadowy semblance sad
 With earnest speech discoursing me the while.
 The soul of my departed mother next,

Of Anticleia, daughter of the brave 100
 Autolycus, approach'd, whom, going forth
 To Ilium, I had living left at home.

Her seeing, with compassion touch'd, I wept
 Yet even her, although it pain'd my soul,
 Forbade, relentless, to approach the blood,
 Till with Tiresias I should first confer.

Then came the spirit of the Theban seer
 Himself, his golden sceptre in his hand,
 Who knew me, and inquiring, thus began:

Why, wretched man! the sun's bright beams re-
 nounc'd, 110

Com'st thou to visit in this joyless place
The shades of men departed? Leave the trench,
And turn thy falchion's glitt'ring edge away,
That I may drink the blood, and tell thee truth.

He spake; I, thence receding, deep infix'd
My glitt'ring falchion in the sheath again;
And when the prophet from the crimson pool
Had drawn till satisfied, he thus began:

Thou seek'st a pleasant voyage home again,
Renown'd Ulysses! but a God will make 120

That voyage difficult; for, as I judge,
Thou wilt not pass by Neptune unperceiv'd,
Whose anger still pursues thee, for the sake
Of Polypheme his son, made blind by thee.
At length, however, after num'rous woes,
Thou mayst attain, perchance, thy native isle,
If thy own appetite thou wilt control,
And theirs who follow thee, what time thy bark
Well-built shall at Thrinacia's shore arrive,
Escap'd from perils of the gloomy Deep. 130

There grazing ye shall find the flocks and herds
Of the all-seeing and all-hearing Sun,
Which if, attentive to thy safe return,
Thou leave unharm'd, though after num'rous woes,
Ye may at length your Ithaca regain.

But if thou violate them, I denounce
Destruction on thy ship and all thy band,
And though thyself escape, thou shalt arrive
Late and afflicted, all thy people lost,
And in a foreign bark. Distress, besides, 140

Awaits thee there, for thou shalt find within
Proud suitors of thy noble wife, who waste
Thy substance, and with promis'd spousal gifts
Ceaseless solicit her to wed; yet well
Shalt thou avenge all their injurious deeds.

That once perform'd, and every suitor slain,
Either by stratagem, or face to face
In thy own palace, bearing, as thou go'st,
An oar, cease not to journey, till thou find
A people who the sea know not, nor eat 150
Food salted; they trim galley crimson-prow'd
Have ne'er beheld, nor yet smooth-shaven oar,

With which the vessel wing'd scuds o'er the waves.
 Well thou shalt know them ; this shall be the sign—
 When thou shalt meet a trav'ler, who shall name
 The oar, on thy broad shoulder borne, a van,
 There, deep infixing it within the soil,
 Worship the king of Ocean with a bull,
 A ram, and a lascivious boar ; then seek
 Thy home again, and sacrifice at home 160
 A hecatomb to the Immortal Gods,
 Adoring duly each, and in his course.
 So shalt thou die in peace a gentle death,
 Remote from Ocean ; it shall find thee late,
 In soft serenity of age, the chief
 Of a bless'd people.—I have told thee truth.

So spake the seer, to whom I thus replied—
 The Gods themselves, Tiresias ! have ordain'd
 My suff'rings such. But tell me, for I need
 Thy sage instruction still, and tell me true. 170
 Sullen, and mute, and with averted looks,
 Here sits, beside the trench, my mother's shade—
 How shall she know me once so dearly lov'd ?

So I ; when answer thus the seer return'd :
 The means are easy ; learn them ; they are these.
 What shade soe'er, by leave from thee obtain'd,
 Shall taste the blood, that shade will tell thee truth ;
 The rest, prohibited, will all retire.

When thus the spirit of the royal seer
 Had his prophetic mind reveal'd, again 180
 He enter'd Pluto's gates ; but I unmov'd
 Still waited, till my mother's shade approach'd ;
 She drank the blood, then knew me, and in words
 Wing'd with affection, plaintive, thus began :

How, O my son ! still living, hast thou reach'd
 This darksome region ? Arduous is the task,
 For living man to mingle with the dead.
 Broad rivers roll, and awful floods between,
 And Ocean wider still, whose gulfs forbid
 All access, save to well-built barks alone. 190
 Is this sad shore the first, where thou and thine,
 After long wand'ring, from the shores of Troy
 Have disembark'd ? And hast thou not beheld
 Thy consort yet, nor reach'd thy native home ?

She spake; to whom this answer I return'd:
My mother! me necessity constrain'd
To Pluto's dwelling, anxious to consult
Theban Tiresias; for I have not yet
Approach'd Achaia, nor have touch'd the coast
Of Ithaca, but have been evermore 200
A woful wand'rer, since I follow'd first
King Agamemnon to the war of Troy.
But speak, my mother, and the truth alone;
What stroke of fate slew *thee*? Fell'st thou a prey
To some slow malady? or by the shafts
Of gentle Dian suddenly subdu'd?
Speak also of my sire, and of my son;
Share they such honours, as, allied to me,
They justly claim? Or have the people crown'd
Some other, through despair of my return? 210
What views have influenc'd, and what counsels most
The conduct of my wife? Persist she still
Discharging tenderly the mother's part,
And wisely managing her home concerns?
Or hath she wander'd to another mate,
And wedded with the noblest of the Greeks?
I ceas'd; when thus the venerable shade:
Not so; she faithful still and patient dwells
Beneath thy roof; but dwells a mourner there,
With weeping anguish wasted night and day. 220
Thy dignities and fair possessions still
Continue thine; Telemachus, thy son,
Tills undisturb'd thy land, and sits a guest
At many a noble banquet, such as well
Beseems the splendour of his princely state,
For all invite him. At his farm retir'd
Thy father dwells, nor to the city comes
For aught; nor bed, nor furniture of bed,
Furr'd cloaks or splendid arras he enjoys,
But with his servile hinds all winter sleeps 230
In ashes and in dust beside the fire,
Coarsely apparell'd; and when summer comes,
Or genial autumn, on the fallen leaves
In any nook, not curious where, he finds
An humble couch among his fruitful vines.
There, stretch'd forlorn, indulging hopeless grief,

And worn with age, thy fortune he deplores.
So perish'd I; such fate I also found;
Me neither from above Diana pierc'd,
Right-aiming arch'ress, with her gentle shafts, 240
Nor any dread distemper, such as wastes
And slowly withers life, extinguish'd mine;
But dear remembrance of thy filial love
And kindness, that should never sooth me more,
These, my Ulysses! fatal prov'd to me.

She said; I ardent wish'd to clasp the shade
Of my departed mother; thrice I sprang
Toward her, by desire impetuous urg'd,
And thrice she flitted from between my arms,
Light as a passing shadow or a dream. 250
Then, pierc'd by keener grief, in accents wing'd
With filial earnestness I thus replied:

My mother; why elud'st thou my attempt
To clasp thee, that ev'n here, in Pluto's realm,
We might to full satiety indulge
Our grief, infolded in each other's arms?
Hath Proserpine, offended, sent me forth
An empty shade, t' afflict me still the more?

Then instant thus the venerable form:
Ah, son! thou most afflicted of mankind! 260
On thee Jove's daughter, Proserpine, obtrudes
No vain illusion, but a fix'd decree
Such renders, once deceas'd, all humankind.
Thenceforth no muscular support they need,
Divested, by the fierce funereal fires,
Of flesh and bones; and when the mind expell'd
Hath left the limbs all lifeless, like a dream,
The unsubstantial soul then flits away.
But haste thou back to light, and, taught thyself
These sacred truths, hereafter teach thy spouse. 270

Thus mutual we conferr'd. Then thither came,
Sent from beneath by Proserpine, the shades
Of num'rous women, wives and daughters all
Of kings and heroes. Close around the trench,
Eager to drink the crimson pool they stood.
But I, consid'ring sat, how I might each
Interrogate, and thus resolv'd. My sword
Forth drawing from beside my sturdy thigh,

Firm I prohibited the ghosts to drink
The blood together; they successive came; 280
Each told her own distress; I question'd all.

There first the high-born Tyro I beheld;
She claim'd Salmoneus as her sire, and her
Had Cretheus, son of Æolus, espous'd.
Enamour'd of Enipeus, stream divine,
Loveliest of all that water Earth, beside
His limpid current she was wont to stray,
When Ocean's God, Enipeus' form assum'd,
Within the eddy-whirling river's mouth
Embrac'd her; there, while the o'er-arching flood, 290
Uplifted mountainous, conceal'd the God
And his fair human bride, her virgin zone
He loos'd, and o'er her eyes sweet sleep diffus'd.
His am'rous purpose satisfied, he grasp'd
Her hand affectionate, and thus he said:

Rejoice in this, my love, and when the year
Shall tend to consummation of its course,
Illustrious twins produce; for love divine
Is never fruitless. With affection due
Sustain and cherish them, and well beware, 300
That, going hence, thou boast not my embrace,
For I am Neptune, sov'reign of the Deep.

He said; and whelm'd in ocean disappear'd.
She Pelius bore and Neleus, heroes both,
And sceptre-swaying delegates of Jove.
Pelias the plains of Iäolchus own'd,
Of num'rous flocks possess'd; but his abode
Amid the sands of Pylus Neleus chose.
To Cretheus wedded next, the lovely nymph
Yet other sons, Æson and Pheres, bore, 310
And Amythaon of equestrian fame.

I next the daughter of Asopus saw,
Antiope; she gloried to have known
Th' embrace of Jove himself, to whom she brought
A double progeny, Amphion nam'd
And Zethus; they the first foundations laid
And built the tow'rs of seven-gated Thebes,
For that, though valiant both, in spacious Thebes,
Unfenc'd by tow'rs, they could not dwell secure.

Alcmena next, Amphitryon's wife, I saw, 320

By Jove's embrace made mother of the bold
And lion-hearted Hercules ; with her
Came also Megara, from Creon sprung,
And by th' unconquer'd Hercules espous'd.

The beauteous Epicaste saw I then,
Mother of Œdipus, who guilt incurr'd
Enormous, fatally deceiv'd and match'd
With her own son ; he first his father slew,
Then wedded her, which soon the Gods divulg'd.
He, under vengeance of offended Heav'n, 330
In pleasant Thebes dwelt miserable, king
Of the Cadmean race ; she to the gates
Of Ades brazen-barr'd despairing went,
Self-strangled by a cord made fast aloft
To her own palace-roof, and woes bequeath'd
(Such as the Fury sisters execute
Innumerable) to her guilty son.

There also lovely Chloris I beheld,
Amphion's last-born daughter, and the bride
Of Neleus, chosen for her beauty's sake, 340
And gifted at his hands with countless dow'r.
Neleus supreme in sandy Pylus reign'd,
And in Orchomenus, and sire became
Of an illustrious offspring ; for she bore,
First, Nestor ; Chromius, second ; after whom
Undaunted Periclymenus ; and, last,
His daughter Pero, wonder of all eyes,
Whom ev'ry neighbour of the Pylian realm
In marriage sought, but none might hope to win
From Neleus, save alone who should prevail, 350
To drive from Phylace the guarded herds
Of king Iphiclus. Of them all, alone,
Melampus undertook that arduous task,
The prophet ; but by Fate's severe decree,
The herdsmen bound, and held him pris'ner there.
At length (the year, with all its months and days
Concluded, and the new-born year begun)
The king Iphiclus, for his wisdom's sake,
And grateful for mysterious sayings solv'd,
Releas'd him, and the will of Jove was done. 360

Next Leda, wife of Tyndarus, I saw,
Who bore to Tyndarus a noble pair,

Castor the bold, and Pollux, cestus-fam'd.
 Though pris'ners in the fertile womb of Earth,
 They still survive, and honour even there
 From Jove obtain; by turns they die, they live,
 Nor less than Gods in Earth are deem'd or Heav'n.

The consort of Aloëus next I view'd,
 Iphimedia. She to Neptune bore,
 For him she call'd their Father, a short-liv'd 370
 But godlike pair of never dying fame,
 Otus and Ephialtes. Such for height,
 And such for beauty, never by the fruits
 Of Earth were nourish'd, since Orion died.
 Nine cubits were the breadth, nine ells the length,
 At nine years' growth, of each. The Gods them-
 selves

They menac'd, and preparing to disturb
 With all-confounding war the realms above,
 On the Olympian summit thought to fix
 Huge Ossa, and on Ossa's tow'ring head 380
 Pelion with all his forests; so to climb,
 By mountains heap'd on mountains, to the skies.
 Nor had they fail'd, to full-grown youth matur'd,
 But by the son of fair Latona slain
 Both perish'd, ere the cheeks of either yet
 The fleecy down of blooming manhood wore.

Phædra I also there, and Procris saw,
 And Ariadne for her beauty prais'd,
 Whose sire was all-wise Minos. Theseus her
 From Crete toward the fruitful region bore 390
 Of sacred Athens, but enjoy'd not there;
 For first she perish'd by Diana's shafts
 In Dia, Bacchus witnessing her crime.

Mæra and Clymene I saw beside,
 And odious Eriphyle, who receiv'd
 The price in gold of her own husband's life.

But all the wives of heroes whom I saw,
 And all their daughters, can I not relate;
 Night first would fail; and even now the hour
 Calls me to slumber either in my bark 400
 Or here; mean time I in yourselves confide,
 And in the Gods, to shape my conduct home.

He ceas'd; and through the gloomy mansion all

Sat silent, charm'd to rapture, till at length
The beauteous queen, Areta, thus began :

Phæacians ! how appears he in your eyes,
This stranger, graceful as he is in port,
In stature noble, and in mind discreet?
He is my guest; an honour, which alike
All here partake; him therefore send not hence 410
With urgent haste, nor scantily impart
To one so destitute; for ye are rich,
And by kind Heav'n with rare possessions blest.

The hero next Echeneus spake, a chief
Now ancient, eldest of Phæacia's sons :

Wisely, my friends, and not below the praise,
Which all her prudent counsels ever claim,
The queen hath now advis'd, and, if it please
Alcinoüs also, thus will we perform.

To whom the king Alcinoüs replied: 420
As surely as I live, and as I reign,
So shall be done; I ratify the word.
Then let the guest, though anxious to depart,
Wait till the morrow, that I may complete
The whole donation. His safe conduct home
Shall be the gen'ral care, but mine in chief,
To whom dominion o'er the rest belongs.

Him answer'd then Ulysses ever-wise:
Alcinoüs! prince! exalted high o'er all
Phæacia's sons! should ye solicit, kind, 430
My stay throughout the year, preparing still
My conduct home, and with illustrious gifts
Enriching me the while, ev'n that request
Should please me; for the 'vantage all were mine.
I should return still wealthier, and, arriv'd
In Ithaca, should readier welcome find,
And rev'rence more profound obtain from all.

To whom Alcinoüs answer thus return'd:
Ulysses! viewing thee no fears we feel,
Lest thou at length some false pretender prove, 440
Or subtle hypocrite, of whom no few,
Disseminated o'er its face, the Earth
Sustains, adepts in fiction, and who frame
Fables, where fables could be least surmis'd.
Thy phrase well turn'd, and thy ingenuous mind,

Proclaim *thee* diff'rent far, who hast in strains
 Harmonious, like a tuneful bard, rehears'd
 The woes of all thy Grecians and thy own.
 But say, and tell me true. Beheld'st thou there
 None of thy followers to the walls of Troy 450
 Slain in that warfare? Lo! the night is long—
 A night of utmost length; nor yet the hour
 Invites to sleep. Tell me thy wond'rous deeds,
 For I could watch till sacred dawn, couldst thou
 So long endure to tell me of thy toils.

Then thus Ulysses, ever-wise, replied:
 Alcinoüs! high exalted over all
 Phæacia's sons! the time suffices yet
 For converse and for sleep; and if thou wish
 To hear still more, I shall not spare to unfold, 460
 More pitiable still, the woful end
 Of other Grecians, after mine destroy'd,
 Who 'scap'd, indeed, unslaughter'd from the field
 Of Ilium, but who reach'd their native shores,
 Only to perish, victims, at the last,
 Of a perfidious woman's dark designs.

Now when chaste Proserpine had wide dispers'd
 Those female shades, the mournful spirit next
 Of Agamemnon, Atreus' son, appear'd;
 Encircl'd by a throng he came; by all, 470
 Who with himself, beneath Ægisthus' roof
 Their fate fulfilling, perish'd by the sword.
 He knew me quickly, soon as he had drunk
 The crimson pool; with lamentations loud
 He pierc'd the gloom; tears trickling bath'd his
 cheeks,

And with spread palms, through ardour of desire,
 He sought to infold me fast, but vigour none,
 Or force, as erst, his agile limbs inform'd.

I wept for pity at that sight, and thus
 In words by friendship wing'd his shade address'd:

Ah glorious son of Atreus, king of men! 481
 By what dire stroke of destiny subdu'd
 Becam'st thou pris'ner here? By cruel force
 Of overbearing storms, that whelm'd thy barks
 Beneath the waves, at Neptune's dread command?

Or slain at home by robbers arm'd to seize
Thy flocks and herds; or fighting to secure
From hostile pow'rs your city and your wives?

I ceas'd; when Agamemnon thus replied:
Ulysses, noble chief, Laertes' son, 490
For wisdom fam'd! I neither died by force
Of overbearing storms, that whelm'd my barks
Beneath the waves, at Neptune's dread command,
Nor yet by spoilers of my flocks and herds,
But by the base Ægisthus. He, combin'd
With my perfidious wife, the fatal stroke
Contriv'd for me; he bade me to his house,
And slew me at his board, as at his crib
Men slay an ox. Thus miserably died
I and my friends around me, slaughter'd all, 500
As at the nuptials of some wealthy chief,
Or other banquet, bleed the fatted boars
Bright-tusk'd, for service of his num'rous guests.
Thou hast already witness'd many a field
With warriors overspread, slain one by one;
But that dire scene had most thy pity mov'd;
For we, with brimming beakers at our side,
And underneath full tables, bleeding lay.
Blood floated all the pavement. Then the cries
Of Priam's daughter sounded in my ears 510
Most pitiable of all, Cassandra's cries,
Whom Clytemnestra close beside me slew.
Expiring as I lay, I yet essay'd
To grasp my falchion, but the trait'ress quick
Withdrew herself, nor would vouchsafe to close
My languid eyes, or prop my drooping chin,
Ev'n in the moment when I sought the shades.
So that the thing breathes not, ruthless and fell
As woman once resolv'd on such a deed
Detestable, as my base wife contriv'd, 520
The murder of the husband of her youth.
I thought to have gladden'd by my safe return
My children, and the maidens of mine house;
But she, past measure profligate, hath pour'd
Shame on herself, on women yet unborn,
And even on the virtuous of her sex.

He ceas'd; to whom thus answer I return'd:
Gods! how severely hath the Thund'rer plagu'd
The house of Atreus, ev'n from the first,
By female counsels! we for Helen's sake 530
Have num'rous died, and Clytemnestra fram'd,
While thou wast far remote, this snare for thee!

So I; to whom Atrides thus replied:
Thou, therefore, be not pliant overmuch
To woman; trust her not with all thy mind,
But half disclose to her, and half conceal.
Yet from thy consort's hand no bloody death,
My friend, hast thou to fear; for passing wise
Icarius' daughter is, far other thoughts,
Intelligent, and other plans to frame. 540

Her, going to the wars, we left a bride
New-wedded, nourishing her infant boy,
Who, man himself, consorts ere now with men
A prosp'rous youth; his father, safe restor'd
To his own Ithaca, shall see him soon,
And *he* shall clasp his father in his arms
As nature bids; but me, my cruel one
Indulg'd not with the dear delight to gaze
On my Orestes, for she slew me first.
Yet deep repose this counsel in thy breast. 550

Steer secret to thy native isle; avoid
Notice; for woman merits trust no more.
Now tell me truly. Know ye by report,
That still my son survives? where dwells he, say?
With ancient Nestor at his Pylian home,
Or in Orchomenos, or else beneath
My brother's roof in Sparta's wide domain?
For my Orestes is not yet a shade.

So he; to whom I answer thus return'd:
Atrides, ask not me, for of his life 560
Or of his death I know not; words alone
Are empty sounds, and better far suppress'd.

Thus we discoursing mutual stood, and tears
Shedding disconsolate. Achilles' shade
Mean time approach'd me, Peleus' mighty son;
Patroclus also, and Antilochus
Appear'd, with Ajax, for proportion just
And stature tall (Pelides sole except)

Distinguish'd above all Achaia's sons.
The soul of swift Æacides at once 570
Knew me, and in wing'd accents thus began :
Brave Laertiades, for wiles renown'd !
What bolder deed than this wilt thou devise ?
How hast thou dar'd descend into the gloom
Of Hades, where the shadows of the Dead,
Forms without intellect, alone reside ?

So spake the chief; whom answ'ring thus I said :
O Peleus' son ! Achilles ! bravest far
Of all Achaia's race ? I here arriv'd
Seeking Tiresias, from his lips to learn 580
By what means I may reach the rugged coast
Of Ithaca; for, toss'd by ceaseless storms,
Never have I approach'd Achaia's shore,
Or touch'd my country yet, from day to day
Still seeking it in vain. But as for thee,
Felicity like thine, Achilles ! none
Hath known, or shall hereafter; for the Greeks
Thee living honour'd ever as a God,
And thy control is even here supreme
O'er all thy fellow-shades; indulge not then, 590
Achilles, causeless grief that thou hast died.

I ceas'd; and answer thus at once receiv'd :
Renown'd Ulysses ! think not death a theme
Of consolation; I had rather live
The servile hind for hire, and eat the bread
Of some man scantily himself sustain'd,
Than sov'reign empire hold o'er all the shades.
But come—speak to me of my noble boy;
Proceeds he, as he promis'd, brave in arms,
Or shuns he war ? Say also, hast thou heard 600
Of royal Peleus ? shares he still respect
Among his num'rous Myrmidons, or scorn
In Hellas and in Phthia, for that age
Predominates in his enfeebled limbs ?
For help is none in me; the glorious Sun
No longer sees me such, as when in aid
Of the Achaians I o'erspread the field
Of spacious Troy with all their bravest slain.
O might I, vigorous as then, repair
For one short moment to my father's house, 610

They all should tremble; I would show an arm
Such as should daunt the fiercest, who presumes
To injure *him*, or to despise his age.

Achilles spake; to whom I thus replied:
Of noble Peleus have I nothing heard;
But I will tell thee, as thou bidd'st, the truth
Unfeign'd of Neoptolemus thy son;
For him, myself, on board my hollow bark,
From Seyros to Achaia's host convey'd.

Oft as in council under Ilium's walls 620
Our chiefs assembled, foremost he pronounc'd
His mind, and ever prudently; by none,
Save godlike Nestor and myself, excell'd.
Oft, too, as we with battle hemm'd around
Troy's bulwarks, from among the mingled crowd
Thy son sprang foremost into martial act,
Emulous always of superiour fame.

Beneath him num'rous fell the sons of Troy
In dreadful fight, nor have I pow'r to name
Distinctly all, who by his glorious arm, 630
Exerted in the cause of Greece, expir'd.

Yet will I name Eurypylus, the son
Of Telephus, a hero whom his sword
Of life bereav'd, and all around him strew'd
The plain with his Cetean warriors, won
To Ilium's side by bribes to women giv'n.
Save noble Memnon only, I beheld
No chief at Ilium beautiful as he.

Again, when all our bravest to the horse
Of wood ascended, by Epeüs fram'd, 640
And I was charg'd to open or to shut
The hollow fraud; then, many a Grecian chief
And senator the tear in silence wip'd
From his wan cheek, and trembled ev'ry limb;

But never saw I chang'd to terrour's hue
His ruddy cheek, no tears wip'd *he* away,
But oft he press'd me to go forth, his suit
With pray'rs enforcing, griping hard his hilt
And his brass-burden'd spear, and dire revenge
Denouncing, ardent, on the race of Troy. 650

At length, when we had sack'd the lofty town
Of Priam, laden with abundant spoils

He safe embark'd, nor pierc'd by shaft or spear
Sent from afar, nor smitten by the sword,
As oft in war befalls, where wounds are dealt
Promiscuous, at the will of fiery Mars.

I spake; whose praises of his son, the ghost
Of swift Æacides exulting heard,
And measuring with larger strides, for joy,
The meadow gray with asphodel, retir'd. 660

Thus many a mournful ghost beside me stood,
Rehearsing each his sorrows, and alone
The ghost of Ajax ey'd me from afar,
Indignant that Achilles' armour left
By Thetis to the worthiest at the ships,
Troy and Minerva judges of the strife,
Not to himself had fallen, but to me.
Fatal award! and which I now deplore,
Since Ajax (save Achilles) in his form
And martial exploits foremost of the Greeks, 670
Now lies sepultur'd for that armour' sake!
I, seeking to appease him, thus began:

O Ajax, son of glorious Telamon!
Canst thou remember, even after death,
Thy wrath against me, kindled for the sake
Of those pernicious arms? arms which the Gods
Ordain'd of such dire consequence to Greece,
Which caus'd thy death, our bulwark! Thee we
mourn

With grief perpetual, nor the death lament
Of Peleus' son, Achilles, more than thine. 680
Yet none is blameable; Jove evermore
With bitt'rest hate pursu'd Achaia's host,
And he ordain'd thy death. Hero! approach,
That thou mayst hear the words with which I seek
To sooth thee; let thy long displeasure cease!
Quell all resentment in thy gen'rous breast!

I spake; nought answer'd he, but sullen join'd
His fellow ghosts; yet still I had essay'd
To move the angry chief to some reply,
But for the wish, that in my soul I felt, 690
To view the sad estate of others there.

There saw I Minos, offspring fam'd of Jove;
His golden sceptre in his hand, he sat

Judge of the dead; they pleaded each in turn;
Some stood, some sat, surrounding on his throne
The king, whose ample doors are never clos'd.

Orion next, huge ghost, engag'd my view,
Drove urging o'er the grassy mead of beasts,
Which he had slain himself, on the wild hills,
With strong club arm'd of ever-during brass. 700

There also Tityus on the ground I saw
Extended, offspring of the glorious Earth;
Nine acres he o'erspread, and, at his side
Station'd, two vultures on his liver prey'd,
Scooping his entrails; nor his hands were free
To chase them thence; for he had sought to force
Latona, glorious concubine of Jove,
What time through pleasant Panope she pass'd,
A lonely trav'ler to the Pythian dome.

Next, suff'ring grievous torments, I beheld 710
Tantalus; in a pool he stood, his chin
Wash'd by the wave; thirst-parch'd he seem'd, but
found

Nought to assuage his thirst; for when he bow'd
His hoary head, and strove to drink, the flood
Vanish'd absorb'd, and at his feet adust
The soil appear'd, dried instant by the Gods.
Tall trees, fruit laden, with inflected heads
Stoop'd to him, pears, pomegranates, apples bright,
The luscious fig, and unctuous olive smooth; 719
Which when with sudden grasp he would have seiz'd,
Winds whirl'd them high into the dusky clouds.

There too the hard-task'd Sisyphus I saw
Thrusting before him an enormous rock.
With hands and feet struggling, he shov'd the stone
Up to a hill-top; but the steep well-nigh
Vanquish'd, by some great force repuls'd, the mass
Rush'd again, obstinate, down to the plain.

Again, stretch'd prone, he toil'd; sweat bath'd his
limbs,

And thick the dust around his brows arose.

The might of Hercules I next survey'd; 730
His semblance; for himself their banquet shares
With the Immortal Gods, and in his arms

Infolds neat-footed Hebe, daughter fair
 Of Jove, and of his golden-sandall'd spouse.
 Around him, clamorous as birds, the dead
 Swarm'd turbulent; he, gloomy-brow'd as night,
 With uncas'd bow and arrow on the string
 Peer'd terrible from side to side, as one
 Ever in act to shoot: a dreadful belt
 He bore athwart his bosom, thong'd with gold 740
 There broider'd, many a form stupendous shone,
 Bears, wild-boars, lions with fire-flashing eyes,
 Fierce combats, battles, bloodshed, homicide.
 The matchless artist, who that belt devis'd,
 And wrought those various forms, ne'er fram'd the
 like

Before or after. Soon as he beheld
 He knew me, and in sorrow thus began:

Laertes' noble son, for wiles renown'd!
 Ah, hapless hero! thou art, doubtless, charg'd,
 Thou also, with some arduous labour, such 750
 As in the realms of day I once endur'd.
 Son of Saturnian Jove, I yet sustain'd
 Enormous toils, subjected to a man
 In worth and might inferiour far to me,
 For whom much arduous servive I perform'd.
 He even bade me on a time lead hence
 The dog, that task believing above all
 Impracticable; yet from Ades him
 I dragg'd reluctant into light, by aid
 Of Hermes, and of Pallas azure-ey'd. 760

So saying, he penetrated deep again
 The abode of Pluto; but I still unmov'd
 There stood expecting, curious, other shades
 To see of heroes in old time deceas'd,
 And Theseus and Pirithoüs had beheld
 Fam'd offspring of the Gods, with other chiefs
 Of old renown, and even whom I would;
 But nations countless of the shadowy Dead,
 Now gath'ring fast around me, rent the air
 With hideous outcry; me pale horror seiz'd, 770
 Lest awful Proserpine should thither send
 The Gorgon-head from Ades, sight abhorr'd!

Thence therefore hasting to the shore, I bade
My crew cast loose their moorings and embark.
Obedient they their seats on board resum'd,
And down th' Oceanus with oars we won
Our passage first, then fann'd by pleasant gales.

BOOK XII.

Argument.

Ulysses, pursuing his narrative, relates his return from the shades to Circe's island; the precautions given him by that Goddess; his escape from the Sirens, and from Scylla and Charybdis; his arrival in Sicily, where his companions, having slain and eaten the oxen of the Sun, are afterward shipwrecked and lost; and concludes the whole with an account of his arrival, alone, on the mast of his vessel, at the island of Calypso.

WHEN, down the smooth Oceanus impell'd
By prosp'rous gales, my galley, once again,
Cleaving the billows of the spacious Deep,
Had reach'd th' Ææan isle, where sprightly Morn
Comes dancing forth, and Phœbus first appears,
We thrust her to the sands, and, going forth,
Slept on the beach till ruddy dawn arose.
But soon as Dayspring's daughter rosy-palm'd
Look'd forth again, sending my friends before,
I bade them bring Elpenor's body down 10
From the abode of Circe to the shore.
Then, on the utmost headland of the coast
We timber fell'd, and, sorrowing o'er the dead,
Water'd his fun'ral rites with many tears.
The dead consum'd, and with the dead his arms,
We heap'd his tomb, and, the sepulchral post
Erecting, fix'd his shapely oar aloft.

Thus, punctual, we perform'd; nor our return
From Ades knew not Circe, but attir'd 20
In haste, erelong arriv'd, with whom appear'd
Her female train with plenteous viands charg'd,
And bright wine rosy-red. Amidst us all
Standing, the beauteous Goddess thus began:
Unhappy trav'lers, who have sought, alive,

The house of Hades, destin'd twice to die,
While all besides, once dying, die no more !
Come—take ye food ; drink wine ; and on the beach
All day regale, for he shall hence again
At dayspring o'er the Deep ; but I will mark
Myself your future course, nor uninform'd 30
Leave you in aught, lest, through some dire mistake,
By sea or land new mis'ries ye incur.

The Goddess spake ; whose invitation kind
We glad accepted ; thus we feasting sat
Till set of sun, and quaffing richest wine ;
But when the sun was set and darkness fell,
My crew beside the hawsers slept ; while me
The Goddess leading by the hand apart,
First bade me sit, then, seated opposite,
Inquir'd, minute, of all that I had seen ; 40
And I, from first to last, recounted all.
Then thus the awful Goddess in return :

Thus far thy toils are finish'd. Now attend !
Hear what the Gods themselves, I know, will bring
To thy remembrance in the needful hour.
First shalt thou reach the Sirens ; they the hearts
Enchant of all, who on their coast arrive.
The wretch, who, unforewarn'd approaching, hears
The Sirens' voice, his wife and little ones
Ne'er fly to gratulate his glad return ; 50
But him the Sirens sitting in the meads
Charm with mellifluous song, although he see
Bones heap'd around them, and the mould'ring skins
Of hapless men, whose bodies have decay'd.
But, pass them thou, and, lest thy people hear
Those warblings, ere thou yet approach, with wax
Moulded between thy palms fill all their ears ;
But as for thee—thou hear them, if thou wilt.
Yet let thy people, compassing around
Thy feet and arms with cordage of the ship, 60
Close bind thee to the socket of the mast ;
So shalt thou, raptur'd, hear the Sirens' song.
But if thou supplicate to be releas'd,
Or give such order, then with added cords
Let thy companions bind thee still the more.
When thus thy people shall have safely pass'd

The Sirens, think not, taught by me, to learn
What course thou next shall steer; no—choose thy-
self

The best of two, which I shall now describe.
Here vaulted rocks impend, for ever dash'd 70

By the hoarse billows of the azure Deep;
The blessed Gods those rocks Erratic call.

Not even birds can pass them; not the birds
Themselves which his ambrosia bear to Jove,

But even of those doves the slipp'ry rock
Proves fatal still to one, for which the God

Supplies another, lest the number fail.

Ship never yet, arriving there, escap'd,
But planks and mariners are whelm'd at once,
Or, caught by fiery tempests, swept away. 80

The Argo only from the Colchian shore
Pass'd safely, further'd by the vows of all;

And even her perhaps rude winds had driv'n
Against those bulky rocks, but Juno's aid,

Vouchsaf'd to Jason, sent her safe along.

These rocks are two; one lifts his summit sharp
High as the spacious Heav'ns, in dusky clouds

Envelop'd, which nor autumn sees dispers'd
Nor summer, for the sun shines never there;

No mortal man, with twice ten feet supplied, 90
And were his hands as num'rous, might attain

Its tow'ring head, or to its base descend,
For smoothness such it shows, as if by skill

Of some nice artist polish'd all around.

Full in the centre of its western side,

Turn'd toward Erebus, a cavern yawns

Gloomy and deep; beneath it ye shall steer

Ulysses, glorious chief! your flying bark.

No youth could send an arrow from on board

High as its horrid mouth. There Scylla dwells, 100

And like a wild-beast's whelp of late renounc'd

By its fierce dam, with hungry whinings fills

Her deep recess, a monster to be view'd

With terrour even by the Gods themselves.

Her feet are twelve, all fore-feet; six her necks

Of hideous length, each clubb'd into a head

Terrific, arm'd with fangs in triple row,

Thick-planted, and with carnage fill'd between.
 Plung'd to her middle in the hollow den
 She lurks, protruding from the black abyss 110
 Her heads, with which the rav'ning monster dives
 In quest of dolphins, dogfish, or of prey
 More bulky, such as in the roaring gulfs
 Of Amphitrite without end abounds.
 None ever boasted yet, that he had pass'd
 Her cavern safely, for with ev'ry mouth
 She bears upcaught a mariner away.
 The other rock, Ulysses, thou shalt find
 Humbler, a bow-shot only from the first;
 On this a wild fig grows, broad-leav'd, and here 120
 Charybdis dire ingulfs the sable flood.
 Each day she thrice disgorges, and again
 Thrice drinks, insatiable, the deluge down.
 Ah, fear her then! for should thy bark approach
 What time she drinks the billows, not the pow'r
 Of Neptune's self could rescue thee and thine.
 Steer, therefore, close to Scylla, and thy bark
 Urge swiftly on, since loss of six alone
 Is better far than shipwreck made of all.

So Circe spake; to whom I thus replied: 130
 O Goddess! tell me true. Should I escape,
 Perchance, the dread Charybdis, may I strike
 In their defence, whom Scylla would annoy?

I said; and quick the Goddess in return:
 Wretch! may no toils thy thirst of battle quell,
 Nor even Pow'rs immortal move thy fear?
 For such is Scylla; that enormous pest
 Defies all force; retreats not; cannot die.
 Defence is vain; flight is thy sole resource.
 For shouldst thou linger, putting on thy arms 140
 Beside the rock, beware, lest darting forth
 Her num'rous heads, she seize with ev'ry mouth
 A Grecian, and, with others, even thee.
 Pass therefore swiftly, and aloud invoke
 Crataïs, mother of this plague of man,
 Who will forbid her to assail thee more.
 Thou next shalt reach Thrinacia's isle; there graze
 The num'rous sheep and oxen of the Sun;

Sev'n herds; as many flocks of snowy fleece;
Fifty in each; they breed not, neither die, 150
No shepherds them, but Goddesses attend,
Lampetia fair, and Phaëthusa, both
By nymph Neæra to Hyperion borne.
Them, soon as she had train'd them to an age
Proportion'd to that charge, their mother sent
Into Thrinacia, there to dwell and keep
Inviolatè their father's flocks and herds.
If, anxious for a safe return, thou spare
Those herds and flocks, though after much endur'd,
Ye may at last your Ithaca regain; 160
But shouldst thou violate them, I foretell
Destruction of thy ship and of thy crew;
And though thyself escape, thou shalt return
Late, in ill plight, with not a follower left.

She ended; and the golden morning dawn'd.
Then, all-divine, her graceful steps she turn'd
Back through the isle, and, at the beach arriv'd,
I summon'd all my followers, bade them cast
My vessel loose, and climb her sides again;
Obedient they embark'd, the benches fill'd, 170
And thresh'd with well-tim'd oars the foamy Deep.
And now, melodious Circe, nymph divine,
Sent after us a canvass-stretching breeze,
Pleasant companion of our course, and we
(The tackle all adjusted) to the gale
Resign'd the bark, and to the pilot's care,
And, pierc'd with heart-felt sorrow, thus I said:

O friends! it much imports you to be taught
(Not one but all) such tidings as myself
Have learn'd from Circe, prophetess divine, 180
That should we perish, we may perish arm'd
With like foreknowledge, both yourselves and I.
First we must pass the Sirens singing sweet
In flow'ry meads, of whose enticing strains
She bids us all beware, and me alone
With open ears receive them: me with cords
Bind therefore ye so surely to the mast,
That fix'd, erect, and moveless at its foot
I may perforce remain; and should I sue

In gentle sort, or seek with stern commands,
T' obtain deliv'rance, bind me still the more.

Thus with distinct precaution I prepar'd
My people; rapid in her course, mean time,
My gallant bark approach'd the Sirens' isle,
For brisk and favourable blew the wind.
Then, all at once, a breathless calm ensu'd,
And the waves slumber'd, lull'd by pow'r divine.
Up sprang my people, and, the folded sails
Bestowing safe below, with all their oars
Tim'd in just measure, swept the whit'ning flood. 200
Myself, the while, dissev'ring with my knife
A waxen cake, the num'rous portions chaf'd
Between my palms; erelong the ductile mass
Grew warm, obedient to that ceaseless force,
Assisted by the sun's all-piercing beam.
With that soft liniment I fill'd the ears
Of my complaints, man by man, and they
My feet and arms with strong coercion bound
Of cordage, to the mast-foot well-secur'd.
Then down they sat, and, rowing, thresh'd the brine.
But when with rapid course we had arriv'd 211
Within such distance as a voice may reach,
Not unperceiv'd by them the gliding bark
Approach'd, and thus harmonious they began:

Achaia's boast! Ulysses! glorious chief!
O hither guide thy bark, that thou mayst hear
The Sirens' voice! these shores none ever pass'd,
Till happier first and wiser he became,
List'ning awhile to our melodious song.
For all the woes inflicted by the Gods 220
On Ilium's sons, and on Achaia's host,
And all events wherever else, we know.

So they with voices sweet their music pour'd
On my delighted ear, winning with ease
My heart's desire to listen, and by signs
I bade my people instant set me free.
But they more strenuous row'd, and from their seats
Eurylochus and Perimedes sprang,
With added cords to bind me still the more.
This danger past, and when the Sirens' voice, 230

Now left remote, had lost its pow'r to charm,
Then my companions, freeing from the wax
Their ears, deliver'd me from my restraint.
The island left afar, I soon discern'd
Huge waves and smoke, and horrid thund'rings heard.
All sat aghast; forth flew at once the oars
From ev'ry hand, and with a clash the waves
Smote all together; check'd, the galley stood,
By billow-sweeping oars no longer urg'd,
And I, throughout the vessel man by man 240
Addressing all, encourag'd thus my crew:

We meet not, now, my friends, our first distress.
This evil is not greater than we found,
When the huge Cyclops in his den by force
Imprison'd us, yet even thence we 'scap'd,
My intrepidity and fertile thought
Op'ning the way; and we shall recollect
These dangers also, in due time, with joy.
Come, then—pursue my counsel. Ye, your seats
Still occupying, smite the furrow'd flood 250
With well-tim'd strokes, that by the will of Jove
We may escape, perchance, this death, secure.
To thee, the pilot, thus I speak (my words
Mark thou, for at thy touch the rudder moves):
Shunning yon smoke, and those tumultuous waves,
Close by this rock direct thy wary course,
And fear to leave it; lest the vessel slide
Into the currents force, and all be lost.

So I, with whose advice all quick complied.
But Scylla I as yet nam'd not (that wo 260
Without a cure), lest, terrified, my crew
Should all renounce their oars, and crowd below.
Just then, forgetful of the strict command
Of Circe to forbear, I cloth'd my limbs
In radiant armour, grasp'd two quiv'ring spears,
And to the deck ascended at the prow,
Expecting earliest notice there what time
The rock-bred Scylla should annoy my friends.
But I discern'd her not, nor could, although
To weariness of sight the dusky rock 270
I vigilant explor'd. Thus, many a groan

Heaving, we navigated sad the strait,
 For here stood Scylla, while Charybdis there
 With hoarse throat deep absorb'd the briny flood.
 Oft as she vomited the deluge forth,
 Like water caldron'd o'er a furious fire
 The whirling Deep all murmur'd, and the spray
 On both those rocky summits fell in show'rs.
 But when she suck'd the salt wave down again,
 Then all the pool appear'd wheeling about 280
 Within, the rock rebellow'd, and the sea,
 Drawn off into that gulf, disclos'd to view
 The oozy bottom. Us pale horror seiz'd.
 Thus, dreading death, with fast-set eyes we watch'd
 Charybdis; mean time Scylla from the bark
 Caught six away, the bravest of my friends;
 And, as I watching stood the galley's course
 And them within, uplifted high in air
 Their legs and arms I saw. My name aloud
 Pronouncing in their agony, they went, 290
 My name, and never to pronounce it more.
 As when from some bold point among the rocks
 The angler, with his taper rod in hand,
 Casts forth his bait, to snare the smaller fry,
 He swings away remote his guarded line,
 Then jerks aground at once the struggling prey,
 So Scylla them rais'd struggling to the rock,
 And at her cavern's mouth devour'd them all,
 Shrieking and stretching forth to me their arms
 In sign of hopeless mis'ry. Ne'er beheld 300
 These eyes, in all the seas that I have roam'd,
 A sight so piteous, nor in all my toils.

These rocks thus past, Charybdis, and the den
 Of dreadful Scylla, to the fruitful isle,
 Where graze the fatted flocks and spotless herds
 Of bright Hyperion, suddenly we came.
 Ere yet we reach'd the coast, the bleat of sheep,
 And lowings loud of oxen in the stall,
 Came o'er mine ear. Then dropp'd into my mind
 The charge enjoin'd me by the Theban seer, 310
 Tiresias, nor by Circe less enforc'd,
 That I should leave afar with trembling awe
 The island of the all-enliv'ning Sun,

And to my people, sorrowing, thus I said :

Receive, my friends, however sore distress'd,
The charge prophetic of the Theban seer,
Tiresias, and by Circe much enforc'd,
To shun this island, sacred to the God
Of all-enliv'ning day ; for deadliest woes,
She said, would meet us there. Ye, therefore, pass 320
A coast so dang'rous, swiftly as ye may.

I ceas'd ; they me with consternation heard,
And harshly thus Eurylochus replied :

Ulysses, ruthless chief ! no toils impair
Thy strength, of senseless iron thou art form'd,
Who thy companions weary and o'erwatch'd
Forbidd'st to disembark on this fair isle,
Where now, at last, we might with ease regale.
Thou, rash, command'st us, leaving it afar,
To roam all night the Ocean's dreary waste ; 330
But winds to ships injurious spring by night,
And how shall we escape a dreadful death,
If chance a sudden gust from South arise,
Or stormy West, that dash in pieces oft
The vessel, even in the Gods' despite ?
Prepare we rather now, as night enjoins,
Our ev'ning fare beside the sable bark,
In which at peep of day we may again
Launch forth secure into the boundless flood.

He ceas'd, whom all applauded. Then I knew 340
That sorrow by the will of adverse Heav'n
Approach'd, and in wing'd accents thus replied :

I suffer force, Eurylochus ! and yield
O'er-rul'd by numbers. Come, then, swear ye all
A solemn oath, that, should we find a herd,
Or num'rous flock, none here shall either sheep
Or bullock slay, by appetite profane
Seduc'd, but shall the viands eat content,
Which from immortal Circe we receiv'd.

I spake ; they readily a solemn oath 350
Sware all, and when their oath was fully sworn,
Within a creek, where a fresh fountain rose,
They moor'd the bark, and, issuing, began
Brisk preparation of their ev'ning cheer.
But when nor hunger more nor thirst remain'd

Unsated, recollecting then their friends
By Scylla seiz'd, and at her cave devour'd,
They mourn'd, nor ceas'd to mourn them, till they
slept.

The night's third portion come, when now the stars
Had travers'd the mid sky, ethereal Jove 360
Call'd forth a vehement wind with tempest charg'd,
Menacing earth and sea with pitchy clouds
Tremendous, and the night fell dark from Heav'n.
But when Aurora, daughter of the day,
Look'd rosy forth, we thrust the threaten'd ship
For safety far within a deep recess
Umbrageous, whither oft the nymphs retir'd
For sport and for repose, and, gath'ring there
My gallant friends around me, thus I said :

My friends ! food fails us not, but bread is yet 370
And wine on board. Abstain we from the herds,
Lest harm ensue ; for ye behold the flocks
And herds of a most potent God, the Sun !
Whose eye and watchful ear may none elude.

So saying, I sway'd the gen'rous minds of all.
A month complete the South wind ceaseless blew,
Nor other wind blew next, save East and South ;
Yet they, while neither food nor rosy wine
Fail'd them, the herds harm'd not, through fear to die.
But when at length provision none remain'd, 380
Necessity then sent them forth to roam
In quest of prey, with pointed hooks to snare
Fishes, or birds, and even what they might,
By famine urg'd. I solitary roam'd
Mean time the isle, and pray'd, with hope to move
Some God to show us a deliv'rance thence.
When, roving thus the isle, I had at length
Left all my crew remote, I lav'd my hands,
Where shelter warm from ev'ry blast I found,
And supplicated all the Pow'rs above ; 390
But they my eyes with slumber whelm'd, and thus
Eurylochus seduc'd my crew the while :

My friends ! afflicted as ye are, yet hear
A fellow-suff'rer. Death, however caus'd,
Abhorrence moves in miserable man ;
But death by famine is a fate of all

Most to be fear'd. Come, drive me to the shore
 The best and fairest oxen of the Sun,
 For sacrifice to the Immortal Pow'rs,
 Resolving thus—that, soon as we shall reach 400
 Our native Ithaca, we will erect
 To bright Hyperion an illustrious fane,
 With which magnificent and num'rous gifts
 We will enrich. But should he choose to sink
 Our vessel, for his stately beeves incens'd,
 And should with him all Heav'n resent the deed,
 I rather had with open mouth at once,
 Meeting the billows, perish, than by slow
 And pining mis'ry in this desert isle.

So spake Eurylochus, whom all approv'd. 410
 Then, driving all the fattest of the herd
 Few paces only, (for the sacred beeves
 Graz'd rarely distant from the bark), they stood
 Encircling them around, and, grasping each
 Green foliage newly pluck'd from saplings tall
 (For barley none in all our bark remain'd),
 Worshipp'd the Gods in pray'r. Pray'r made they
 slew

And flay'd them, and the thighs with double fat
 Investing, spread them o'er with slices crude.
 No wine had they, with which to consecrate 420
 The blazing rites, but with libation poor
 Of water hallow'd the interiour parts.
 Now, when the thighs were burnt, and each had shar'd
 His portion of the maw, and when the rest,
 All slash'd and scor'd, hung roasting at the fire,
 Sleep in that moment suddenly my eyes
 Forsaking, to the shore I bent my way.
 But ere the station of our bark I reach'd,
 The sav'ry vapour met me. At the scent
 I groan'd aloud, and to the Gods exclaim'd: 430

O Jupiter, and all ye Pow'rs above!
 With cruel sleep and fatal ye have lull'd
 My cares to rest, such horrible offence
 Mean time my rash companions have devis'd.

Then flew long-stol'd Lampetia to the Sun
 At once with tidings of his slaughter'd beeves,
 And he, incens'd, the Immortals thus address'd:

Jove, and ye everlasting Pow'rs divine !
 Avenge me instant on the crew profane
 Of Laertiades; Ulysses' friends 440
 Have dar'd to slay my beeves, which I with joy
 Beheld, both when I climb'd the starry Heav'ns,
 And when to Earth I slōp'd my "west'ring wheels;"
 They shall requite the wrong, or I renounce
 Henceforth the skies, and give the ghosts my beams.

Then thus the Ruler of the realms of air :
 Sun ! shine thou still on the Immortal Pow'rs,
 And on the teeming Earth, frail man's abode,
 My candent bolts can shiver at a stroke
 Their flying bark amid the billowy Deep. 450

These things Calypso, taught them, as she said,
 Herself by Mercury, made known to me.

But when, descending to the shore, I reach'd
 At length my bark, with look and tone severe
 I reprimanded them, yet no redress
 Could frame, or remedy—the beeves were dead.
 Soon follow'd signs portentous sent from Heav'n.
 The skins all crept, and on the spits the flesh,
 Both crude and roasted, moan'd as with the voice
 Of living beeves. Thus my devoted friends, 460
 Driving the fattest oxen of the Sun,
 Feasted six days entire; but when the sev'nth
 By mandate of Saturnian Jove appear'd,
 The storm then ceas'd to rage, and we, again
 Embarking, launch'd our galley, rear'd the mast,
 And gave our unfurl'd canvass to the wind.

The island left afar, and other land
 Appearing none, but sky alone and sea,
 Right o'er the hollow bark Saturnian Jove
 A blue cloud station'd, dark'ning all the Deep. 470
 Not long my vessel ran, for, blowing wild,
 Now came shrill Zephyrus; a stormy gust
 Snapp'd sheer the shrouds on both sides; backward
 fell

The mast, and with loose tackle strew'd the hold;
 Striking the pilot in the stern, it crush'd
 His scull together; he a diver's plunge
 Made downward, and his noble spirit fled.
 Then Jove, still thund'ring, hurl'd into the ship

His candent bolts; she, quaking all her length,
With sulphur reek'd, and o'er her shatter'd sides 480
My people plunging on the boist'rous waves
Like seamews rode, forbidden by that stroke
Of wrath divine to hope their country more.
But I the vessel still pac'd to and fro,
Till sever'd by the storm her planks and ribs
Forsook the keel, now left to float alone.
Snapp'd where it join'd the keel the mast had fall'n,
But fell encircled with a leathern brace,
Which it retain'd; binding with this the mast
And keel together, on them both I sat, 490
Borne helpless onward by the dreadful gale.
And now the West subsided, and the South
Arose instead, with mis'ry charg'd for me,
That I might measure back my course again
To dire Charybdis. All night long I drove,
And when the sun arose, at Scylla's rock
Once more, and at Charybdis' gulf arriv'd.
It was the fearful time when she absorb'd
The briny flood, but, by a wave upborne,
I seiz'd the branches of the wild-fig fast, 500
To which, bat-like, I clung; yet where to fix
My foot secure found not, or where to ascend,
For distant lay the roots, and distant shot
The largest arms erect into the air,
O'ershadowing all Charybdis; therefore hard
I clench'd the boughs, till she disgorg'd again
Both keel and mast. Not undesir'd by me
They came, though late; for at what hour the judge,
After decision made of num'rous strifes
Between young candidates for honour, leaves 510
The forum for refreshment' sake at home,
Then was it that the mast and keel emerg'd.
Deliver'd to a voluntary fall,
Fast by those beams I dash'd into the flood,
And, seated on them both, with oary palms
Impell'd them; nor the Sire of Gods and men
Permitted Scylla to discern me more,
Else in that moment had I surely died.
Nine days I floated, and the Gods, at length,
On the tenth night, the beams which I bestrode 520

Drove to Ogygia, where the beauteous nymph
 Calypso dwells; she pitied and supplied
 My want of all things.—But let this suffice.
 Whate'er ensu'd thy royal spouse and thou
 Learn'd yesterday; and, to rehearse a tale
 So lately told, were wearisome and vain.

BOOK XIII.

Argument.

Ulysses, having finished his narrative, and received additional presents from the Phæacians, embarks; he is conveyed in his sleep to Ithaca, and in his sleep is landed on that island. The ship that carried him is in her return transformed by Neptune to a rock.

Minerva meets him on the shore, enables him to recollect his country, which, till enlightened by her, he believes to be a country strange to him, and they concert together the means of destroying the suitors. The Goddess then repairs to Sparta, to call thence Telemachus; and Ulysses, by her aid disguised like a beggar, proceeds towards the cottage of Eumæus.

HE ceas'd, and under all the gloomy roof
The charm'd assembly, motionless and mute,
Seem'd list'ning still to hear, when thus his speech
To Laertiades the king address'd :

Ulysses, since beneath my brazen dome
Thou hast arriv'd, thou shalt not, I believe,
Like hardship suffer in thy voyage hence,
As heretofore, though long to toil inur'd,
And ye, my guests! who daily at my board
Sweet song enjoy, and quaff your princely meed 10
Of gen'rous wine, hear now my warm desire.
The robes, wrought gold, and all the other gifts,
To this our guest by the Phæacian chiefs
Brought hither, in the sumptuous coffer lie.
But come—present ye to the stranger, each,
An ample tripod also, with a vase
Of smaller size, for which we will be paid
By public impost; for the charge of all
Excessive were by one alone defray'd.

So spake Alcinoüs, and his counsel pleas'd; 20
Then all retiring sought repose at home.

But when Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
Look'd rosy forth, each hasted to the bark
With his illustrious present, which the king,
Alcinoüs, proceeding through the ship,
Safely himself beneath the seats bestow'd,
Lest it should harm or hinder, while he toil'd
In rowing, some Phæacian of the crew.
The palace of Alcinoüs seeking next
Together, they prepar'd a new regale. 50

For them, in sacrifice, the sacred might
Of king Alcinoüs slew an ox to Jove
Saturnian, cloud-girt governor of all.
The thighs first burnt in sacrifice, all shar'd
The noble feast; Demodocus, the while,
Their fav'rite, striking his melodious lyre.
But oft Ulysses to the radiant sun
Turn'd wistful eyes, desiring his decline,
And even now impatient to depart.
As when some hungry swain, whose sable beeves 40
Have through the fallow dragg'd his pond'rous plough
All day, the setting sun with joy beholds,
And hungry tends and weary to his home,
So welcome to Ulysses' eyes appear'd
The sun-set of that eve; directing then
His speech to maritime Phæacia's sons,
But to Alcinoüs chiefly, thus he said:

Alcinoüs, o'er Phæacia's realm supreme!
Libation made, dismiss ye me in peace,
And farewell all! for what I wish'd, I have, 50
Conductors hence, and honourable gifts,
With which Heav'n prosper me! and may the Gods
Vouchsafe to me, at my return, to find
All safe, my spotless consort and my friends!
May ye, whom here I leave, have happy wives,
And see your children blest; and may the pow'rs
Immortal with all good enrich you all,
And from calamity preserve the land!

He ended; they unanimous his words
Applauded loud, and bade dismiss the guest. 60
Who had so wisely spoken, and so well.
Then thus Alcinoüs to his herald spake:

Pontonoüs! charging high the beaker, bear

To ev'ry guest beneath our roof the wine,
That, pray'r preferr'd to the eternal Sire,
We may dismiss our inmate to his home.

Then bore Pontonoüs to ev'ry guest
The brimming cup; they, where they sat, perform'd
Libation due; but the illustrious chief,
Ulysses, from his seat arising, plac'd 70
A massy goblet in Areta's hand,
Whom thus in grateful accents he address'd:

Farewell, O Queen, a long farewell, till age
Arrive, and death, the appointed lot of all!
I go; but be this people, and the king,
Alcinoüs, and thy progeny, thy joy
Yet many a year beneath this glorious roof!

So saying, the hero through the palace-gate
Issu'd, whom, by Alcinoüs' command,
The royal herald usher'd to his bark. 80
Three maidens also of Areta's train
His steps attended; one the robe well-bleach'd
And tunick bore; the corded coffer one;
And food the third, with wine of crimson hue.
Arriving where the galley rode, each gave
Her charge to some brave mariner on board,
And all was safely stow'd. Mean time were spread
Linen and arras on the deck astern,
For his secure repose. And now the chief
Himself embarking silent laid him down. 90
Then ev'ry rower to his bench repair'd;
They drew the loosen'd cable from its hold
In the drill'd rock, and re-supine at once
With lusty strokes upturn'd the flashing waves.
His eyelids soon a deathlike sleep depress'd,
Deep, durable, and not to be dispers'd.
She, as four harness'd stallions o'er the plain
Shooting together at the scourge's stroke
Toss high their manes, and rapid scour along,
So mounted she the waves, while dark the flood 100
Of the resounding Deep roll'd after her.
She steady ran and safe, the falcon's flight
Outstripping, swiftest of the fowls of Heav'n;
With such rapidity she cut the waves,
A hero bearing, as a God replete

With various wisdom, vex'd and harass'd oft
In stormy battles and tempestuous seas,
But sleeping now serenely, and resign'd
To sweet oblivion of all sorrow past.

The brightest star of Heav'n, precursor chief 110
Of day-spring, now arose, when at the isle
(Her voyage soon perform'd) the bark arriv'd.

In Ithaca, but from the public view
Sequester'd far, there is a certain port
Sacred to Phorcys, ancient of the Deep,
Form'd by converging shores, abrupt alike
And prominent, which from the spacious bay
Exclude all boist'rous winds; within it ships,
The port once gain'd, uncabled ride secure.

An olive at the haven's head expands 120
Her branches wide, near to a pleasant cave
Umbrageous, to the nymphs devoted nam'd
The Naiads. Beakers in that cave and jars
Of stone are found; bees lodge their honey there;
And there on slender spindles of the rock
The nymphs of rivers weave their wondrous robes.

Perennial springs rise in it, and it shows
A twofold entrance; ingress one affords
To men, and fronts the North; but, holier far,
The Southern opens to the Gods alone. 130

There, knowing well the port, they boldly thrust
The vessel in; she rapid plough'd the sands
With half her keel, such rowers urg'd her on.

The benches left, and leaping all ashore,
Ulysses first they gently lifted forth
With the whole splendid couch whereon he lay,
And plac'd him, still fast-sleeping, on the sands.

His treasures next, by the Phæacian chiefs
At his departure giv'n him as the meed
Due to his wisdom, at the olive's foot 140

They heap'd, without the road, lest, while he slept,
Some needy wand'rer should invade the store.

Then homeward thence they sped. Nor Ocean's God
His threats forgot, denounc'd against divine
Ulysses, but with Jove thus first advis'd :

Eternal Sire! I shall no longer share
Respect and reverence among the Gods,

Since e'en Phæacia's sons, although a race
 Deriv'd from me, my pleasure little heed,
 For I had purpos'd yet with many a storm 150
 To vex Ulysses, ere he reach'd his home,
 Though finally to sink whom thou hadst sworn
 At last to save, was never my design.

But they have borne him sleeping o'er the waves
 In a swift bark, and on his native sands
 Have laid him, with a treasure at his side
 Of steel, of tissu'd raiment, and of gold;
 A store, surpassing all that he had own'd,
 Had he return'd in peace, and still possess'd
 His whole allotment of the spoils of Troy. 160

To whom the Sov'reign of the realms of air:
 What hast thou spoken, Shaker of the shores,
 Wide-ruling Neptune? Entertain no fear
 Of aught dishonourable from the Gods;
 The Gods will tremble to dishonour thee,
 More ancient and more powerful than they.
 But should, profanely rash, a mortal man
 Slight thee, revenge is ever in thy pow'r;
 Accomplish all thy pleasure, thou art free.

Him answer'd then the Shaker of the shores: 170
 I soon would use, dread Sov'reign of the storms!
 The freedom which thou giv'st, but that I wait,
 Studious through fear, to learn thy pleasure first.
 Now, therefore, full amid the dreary Deep
 Will I destroy yon fair Phæacian bark,
 Return'd from safe conveyance of her freight;
 So shall they waft such wand'ers home no more,
 And she shall hide their city, to a rock
 Transform'd of mountainous o'ershadowing size.

Him then Jove answer'd, gath'rer of the clouds: 181
 Perform it, O my brother, and the deed,
 Thus done, shall best be done—What time the ship
 Shall draw the gazing citizens, to mark
 Her near approach, convert her into stone
 Fast by the beach, but leave her shape the same;
 Then shall they wonder, seeing such a mass
 Of solid rock fix'd right before the walls.

This heard, at once the Shaker of the shores,
 To fair Phæacian Scheria setting forth,

There watch'd. Erelong, by num'rous oars impell'd,
The flying bark had well-nigh reach'd the land, 191
When Neptune, meeting her, with outspread palm
Depress'd her at a stroke, and she became
Deep-rooted stone. Then Neptune went his way.
Mean time th' amaz'd Phæacians, as they stood
Conferring, to each other thus remark'd:

Who stays the vessel fast amid the waves?
For all afloat, and driven by the force
Of all her oars, this moment she approach'd.

So spake, untaught the cause of her delay, 200
The people, and Alcinoüs thus replied:

Ye Gods! my father's prophecy now strikes
My mind with force, for ofttimes would he say—
Neptune resents it, that we safe conduct
Natives of ev'ry region to their home.
He also spake prophetic of a day,
When a Phæacian gallant bark, return'd
After conveyance of a stranger hence,
Should perish in the dreary Deep, and, chang'd
To a huge mountain, cover all the town. 210

So spake my father, all whose words we see
This day fulfill'd. Thus therefore act we all
Unanimous; henceforth no longer bear
The stranger home, when such shall here arrive;
And we will sacrifice, without delay,
Twelve chosen bulls to Neptune, if, perchance,
He will commiserate us, and forbear
To hide our town behind a mountain's height.

He spake; they, terrified, the bulls prepar'd.
Thus all Phæacia's senators and chiefs, 220
Pray'r off'ring as they stood, encompass'd round
The altar of the Sov'reign of the Deep.
Mean time Ulysses from his native soil,
After long sleep, arose, unconscious where,
Through years of absence and the sable mist
By Pallas cast around him, that his friends,
His citizens, and even his espous'd,
Might fail in recollection of his form,
Till, with herself his guide, he should at length
Avenge him well on all his impious foes. 230
All objects, therefore, in the hero's eyes

Seem'd alien, levell'd roads, commodious ports,
 Heav'n-climbing rocks, and trees of amplest growth.
 Arising, fix'd he stood, his native soil
 Contemplating, till with expanded palms
 Both thighs he smote, and plaintive thus began:

Ah mé! what mortal race inhabits here?
 Rude are they, contumacious, and unjust;
 Or hospitable, and who fear the Gods?
 Where now shall I secrete these num'rous stores? 240
 Where wander I, myself? I would that still
 Phæacians own'd them, and some other prince,
 More faithful, had receiv'd me at his board,
 Who would have sent me to my native home.
 Now neither know I where to place my wealth,
 Nor can I leave it here, lest it become
 Another's prey. Alas! Phæacia's chiefs
 Not altogether wise I deem or just,
 Who have misplac'd me in another land,
 Promis'd to bear me to the pleasant shore 250
 Of Ithaca, but have not so perform'd.
 Jove, guardian of the suppliant's rights, who all
 Transgressors marks, and punishes all wrong,
 Avenge me on the treach'rous race!—but hold—
 I will revise my stores, that I may learn
 What precious part purloin'd they bore away.

So saying, he number'd carefully the gold,
 The vases, tripods bright, and tissu'd robes,
 But nothing miss'd of all. Then, pacing slow
 The boarder of the loud-resounding Deep, 260
 He mourn'd his Ithaca for ever lost
 With tend'rest grief. But Pallas now approach'd.
 She seem'd a youthful shepherd, girlish fair
 In feature, such as are the sons of kings;
 A shapely mantle and of amplest size
 Her waist enclos'd; her nice unsullied feet
 Were sandall'd, and a javelin fill'd her hand.
 Ulysses, joyful at the sight, his steps
 Turn'd brisk toward her, whom he thus address'd:

Sweet youth! since first of all men native here
 I thee encounter, come not with designs 271
 Of harm to me, but save me, and preserve
 My treasures also; for I clasp thy knees

With humblest suit, and pray as to a God.
And tell me, for I much desire to learn,
What land, what people, who inhabit here?
Is this some pleasant island, or a shore
Of fruitful main-land sloping to the sea?

Then thus the Goddess of the azure eyes:
Stranger ! thou sure art simple, or hast dwelt 280
Far distant hence, if of this land thou ask.
It is not, trust me, of so little note,
But known to many ; both to those who dwell
Toward the sunrise, and to others plac'd
Behind it, distant in the dusky West.
Rugged it is, not yielding level course
To the swift steed, and yet no barren spot,
However small, but rich in wheat and wine ;
Nor wants it rain or fertilizing dew,
But pasture green to goats and beeves affords, 290
Trees of all kinds, and fountains never dry.
Ithaca therefore, stranger, is a name
Known ev'n at Troy, a city, by report,
At no small distance from Achaia's shore.

The Goddess ceas'd ; then, toil-enduring chief,
Ulysses, happy in his native land
(So taught by Pallas, progeny of Jove),
With unembarrass'd readiness return'd
Not truth, but figments to truth opposite,
For guile in him stood never at a pause : 300

The fame of Ithaca far hence I learn'd
In spacious Crete, and now, with these my stores,
Leaving behind me, for my children's use,
An equal share, have reach'd myself, the place.
For slaughter of Orsilocus, I fled,
Son of Idomeneus, a youth renown'd
Past all for speed. His purpose was to seize
My whole rich portion of the spoils of Troy,
Earn'd with much toil in fight and on the Deep,
For that I would not gratify the king, 310
His father, as his servant in the field,
Who was, myself, a chief. Him, therefore, late
Returning from the field, in ambush plac'd
At the way-side with a confed'rate friend,
I wounded with my spear. It was a night

Of such thick darkness, that unseen we watch'd
 His coming, and I slew him unperceiv'd.
 Thus, by my glitt'ring spear, transpierc'd, he died,
 And I with earnest suit, and at the cost
 Of much that I had brought from Ilium, won 320
 The crew of a Phæacian gallant bark,
 To bear me thence to Pylus, or the shores
 Of Elis, by the brave Epeans rul'd.
 But they, reluctant, were by violent winds
 Driv'n devious thence, for fraud they purpos'd none.
 We, therefore, wand'ring, here arriv'd by night,
 And with much difficulty push'd the ship
 Into safe harbour, where, neglecting food,
 Though pinch'd with hunger, we with one consent
 All left the bark, and on the beach repos'd. 330
 I, weary, slept profound, and they my goods
 Forth heaving from the ship, beside me plac'd
 The treasures on the sea-beach, where I slept;
 Then, leaving me disconsolate, resum'd
 Their seats on board, and Sidon sought their home.

He ceas'd; then smil'd the Goddess azure-ey'd,
 And now, in form a damsel, fair, and tall,
 And well-accomplish'd, strok'd his cheek, and said:

Who passes thee in artifice well-fram'd,
 And in imposture various, need shall find 340
 Of all his policy, although a God.
 Canst thou not cease, inventive as thou art,
 And subtle, from the wiles which thou hast lov'd
 Since thou wast infant, and from tricks of speech
 Delusive, even in thy native land?
 But come, dismiss we these ingenious shifts
 From our discourse, in which we both excel;
 For thou of all men in expedients most
 Abound'st and eloquence, and I throughout
 All heav'n have praise for wisdom and for art. 350
 And know'st thou not thine Athenæan aid,
 Pallas, Jove's daughter, who in all thy toils
 Assist thee and defend? I gave thee pow'r
 T' engage the hearts of all Phæacia's sons;
 And meet thee now, that here we may concert
 Thy future course, and I will hide the stores
 Giv'n to thee by the rich Phæacian chiefs

On my suggestion, at thy going thence.
 By me instructed, thou shalt also learn
 What grievous troubles thou art doom'd t' endure 360
 In thy own house ; which, since constraint enjoins,
 Bear patiently, nor either man apprise
 Or woman there, that thou hast reach'd thine home
 A wand'rer and forlorn, but silent bear
 What wrongs soever from the hands of men.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied :
 O Goddess ! Thou canst readily assume
 A thousand shapes, too variously to be known
 By mortal man with ease, however wise.
 But this I know, that, while Achaia's sons 370
 At Ilium fought, I found thee still a friend ;
 And that, those lofty tow'rs in ashes laid,
 That shore forsaken, and the Grecian host
 Divided, I beheld thee never more,
 Nor once thine aid experienc'd on the Deep ;
 But wander'd ever with a broken heart
 From shore to shore, till, wafted to the coast
 Of fruitful Scheria by a Pow'r divine,
 I felt thy cheering influence, and thyself
 Didst guide my doubtful footsteps to the town. 380
 But I adjure thee in thy father's name—
 Speak truly—for I fear that I have found
 Some other soil, and that to sooth my pains
 With pleasing fiction is thy sole design,
 Are these my native rocks ? and have I reach'd
 Indeed my long-regretted home at last ?

Then thus the blue-ey'd Goddess in return :
 Such is the mind, that in thy bosom holds
 Dominion ever ; therefore thy distress
 Insures me still thy friend, nor can I leave, 390
 When most he needs me, one endu'd as thou,
 With fluent speech, quick thought, and self-control.
 For what man, save Ulysses, new-return'd
 After long wand'rings, would not haste to see
 At once his home, his children, and his wife ?
 But thou, more cautious, canst endure to want
 All such delights, till first thou have assay'd
 Thy consort's truth, who still, as she was wont,
 Abides at home, in sorrow for thy sake

Consuming night and day.—Full well I knew, 400
 Nor doubted once, that, all thy people lost,
 Thou wouldst return alone, but could not choose
 T' oppose the brother of my father Jove,
 Imperial Neptune, thy determin'd foe,
 For his son's sake, depriv'd of sight by thee.
 But know thy country now; consider well
 These proofs of Ithaca, and be convinc'd.

This is the port of Phorcys, sea-born sage;
 That, the huge olive at the haven's head;
 Not distant far thou seest the pleasant cove 410
 Umbrageous, to the nymphs devoted nam'd
 The Naiads; who beneath its vaulted roof
 Have at thy pious hands erewhile receiv'd
 Many a whole hecatomb; and yonder stands
 The mountain Neritus with forests cloth'd.

So saying, she chas'd the vapour, and the scene
 All open'd on his view; then gladness fill'd
 Ulysses' heart, long time to wo inur'd;
 He kiss'd the soil, and with uplifted hands
 In fervent pray'r, the Naiads thus ador'd: 420

Nymphs of these rills, Jove's daughters! I de-
 spair'd

To see you more, whom yet with happy vows
 I now can hail again. Gifts, as of old,
 We will hereafter at your shrines present,
 If Jove-born Pallas, huntress of the spoils,
 Grant life to me, and manhood to my son.

Then Pallas, blue-ey'd progeny of Jove:
 Take courage; trouble not thy mind with thoughts
 Now needless. Far within this hallow'd cave
 We will conceal, that thine they may remain, 430
 These treasures, and will shape thy future course,
 In mutual conf'rence next, as best we may.

She spake; and deep into the gloomy vault
 Descending, all its secret nooks explor'd
 From side to side; mean time Ulysses brought
 His treasures near, the gold, the temper'd steel,
 And robes magnificent, his gifts receiv'd
 From the Phæacians; safe he lodg'd them all,
 And Pallas, daughter of Jove ægis-arm'd,
 Clos'd fast, herself, the cavern with a stone. 440

Then, on the consecrated olive's root
Both seated, they in consultation plann'd
The deaths of those injurious suitors proud,
And Pallas, blue-ey'd Goddess thus began ;

Laertes' noble son, Ulysses ! think
By what means likeliest thou shalt assail
Those shameless suitors, who have now controll'd
Three years thy family, thy matchless wife
With language amorous and spousal gifts
Urging importunate ; while she, with tears 450
Watching thy wish'd return, hope gives to all,
With messages of promise soothing each,
But frames far other purposes the while.

Then answer thus Ulysses wise return'd :
Ah, Agamemnon's miserable fate
Had surely met me in my own abode,
But for thy gracious warning, pow'r divine !
Come then—devise the means ; thyself prescribe
My way to vengeance, and my soul inspire
With daring fortitude, as when we loos'd 460
Her radiant frontlet from the brows of Troy.
Wouldst thou with equal zeal, O Pallas ! aid
Thy servant here, I would encounter thrice
A hundred enemies, let me but perceive
Thy dread divinity my prompt ally.

Him answer'd then the Goddess azure-ey'd :
That suit I grant thee gladly ; side by side
We will achieve our glorious labour, then ;
And trust me, those proud suitors, who consume
Thy substance now, shall stain thy marble floor, 470
Each with his blood, for payment of the wrong.

But come—for I will give thee now t' elude
All human knowledge ; on thy supple limbs
The skin shall wither ; I will cause thee shed
Thy wavy locks ; I will enfold thee round
In such a kirtle as the eyes of all
Shall loath to look on ; and I will deform
With blurring rheums thy eyes, so vivid erst ;
That all alike, the suitors, and thy spouse,
And thy own son shall deem thee, so disguis'd, 480
Some sordid wretch obscure. But seek thou first
Thy swineherd's mansion ; for his faithful heart

Still bears thee firm allegiance, and he loves
 Thy consort and thy son; the watchful swain
 Now tends his herd; they feed beneath the rock
 Corax, at side of Arethusa's fount,
 On acorns dieted, nutritious food
 To them, and drinking of the limpid stream.
 There waiting, question him of thy concerns,
 While I from Sparta, prais'd for women fair, 490
 Call home thy son Telemachus, a guest
 With Menelaus now, whom to consult
 In spacious Lacedæmon he is gone,
 Anxious to learn if yet his father lives.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied:
 And why, alas! all-knowing as thou art,
 Him left'st thou ignorant? was it that he,
 He also, wand'ring wide the barren Deep,
 Might suffer wo, while these his wealth devour?

To whom the blue-ey'd Deity replied: 500
 Grieve thou not much for him. I sent him forth
 Myself, that, there arriv'd, he might acquire
 Honour and fame. No suff'rings finds he there,
 But in Atrides' palace safe resides,
 Enjoying all abundance. Him, in truth,
 The suitors watch close ambush'd on the Deep,
 Intent to slay him ere he reach his home;
 But those devourers of thy flocks and herds
 Shall find a tomb, I doubt not, first themselves.

So saying, the Goddess touch'd him with a wand.
 At once o'er all his agile limbs she parch'd 511
 The polish'd skin; she wither'd to the root
 His wavy locks, and cloth'd him with the hide
 Deform'd of wrinkled age; she charg'd with rheums
 His eyes before so vivid, and a cloak
 And kirtle gave him, tatter'd both, and foul,
 And smutch'd with smoke; then, casting over all
 A huge old hairless deer-skin, with a staff
 She fill'd his shrivell'd hand, and gave him, last,
 A wallet patch'd all over, and that, strung 520
 With twisted tackle, dangled at his side.

Thus all their plan adjusted, diff'rent ways
 They took, and she to Lacedæmon's vale
 In quest of young Telemachus repair'd.

BOOK XIV.

Argument.

Ulysses, arriving at the house of Eumæus, is hospitably entertained, and spends the night there.

LEAVING the haven-side, he turn'd his steps
Into a rugged path o'er woodland heights,
Where Pallas had directed him to seek
The noble swineherd, who of all his train
Watch'd with most diligence his rural stores.
Him sitting in the vestibule he found
Of his own airy lodge commodious, built
Amidst a level lawn. That structure neat
Eumæus, in the absence of his Lord,
Had rais'd, himself, with stones from quarries hewn,
Unaided by Laertes or the queen. 11
With tangled thorns he fenc'd it safe around,
And with contiguous stakes, riv'n from the trunks
Of solid oak black-grain'd, enclos'd the spot.
Twelve pens he made within, all side by side,
Lairs for his swine, and fast-immur'd in each
Lay fifty pregnant females on the floor.
The males all slept without, less num'rous far,
Thinn'd by the princely wooers; for to them
He ever sent the fattest of his charge. 20
Three hundred, still, and sixty brawns remain'd.
Four mastiffs in adjoining kennels lay,
Resembling wild beasts, which himself, to guard
His herds from theft or violence, sustain'd.
There, shaping sandals to his feet he sat,
Carv'd from a colour'd hide of brightest hue,
A well-fed bullock's hide. Four hinds he kept,
Of whom three now were busied in the pens,

Or in the pasture, and a fourth had sought
 The city, whither, for the suitors' use, 50
 With no good will, but by constraint, he drove
 A boar, that, sacrificing to the Gods,
 Th' imperious guests might on his flesh regale.

The watch dogs suddenly perceiv'd him near,
 And barking ran to him; he, well-advis'd,
 Shrank to his hams, and cast his staff afar.
 Yet, even there, hard measure had he found
 And shameful, worried, well-nigh at the door
 Of his own herdsman's house, but that the swain,
 Following his dogs in haste, sprang through the porch,
 To succour him, and, quitting, as he ran, 41
 The season'd hide, with threats and vollied stones
 Dispers'd them all, then thus his lord bespake:

Old man! one moment more, and these my dogs
 Had, past doubt, worried thee, who shouldst have
 prov'd,

So slain, a source of obloquy to me.
 But other pangs the Gods, and other woes
 To me assign, who sit lamenting here
 My godlike master, and his fatted swine
 Nourish for others' use, while he, perchance, 50
 A wand'rer in some foreign city, seeks
 Fit sustenance, and none obtains, if still
 Indeed he live, and view the light of day.
 But, old friend! follow me into the house,
 That thou, at least, with plenteous food refresh'd,
 And cheer'd with wine sufficient, mayst disclose
 Whence thou arriv'st, and what thou hast endur'd.

So saying, the gen'rous swineherd introduc'd
 Ulysses, and thick bundles spread of twigs
 Beneath him, cover'd with the shaggy skin 60
 Of a wild goat, of which he made his couch
 Easy and large; the hero, so receiv'd
 Rejoic'd, and thus his gratitude express'd:

My gentle host! Jove grant thee, and the Gods
 All grant thee, for this deed, thy best desire!

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply:
 My guest! It were unjust to treat with scorn
 The stranger, though a poorer should arrive
 Than even thou; for all the poor that are,

And all the strangers, are the care of Jove. 70
 Little, and with good will, is all that lies
 Within my scope; for servants, overaw'd
 By young and haughty masters, cannot much.
 My rightful lord—*his* safe return, no doubt,
 The Gods have hinder'd; I had else receiv'd
 From him such recompense as servants gain
 From gen'rous masters, house, allotted land,
 And a fair bride from many a wooer won.
 For, by decree of Heav'n, much profit pays
 Much labour, as my never-ceasing care 80
 Of these evinces, yielding large increase.
 Much had I, therefore, prosper'd, had my lord
 Grown old at home; but he returns no more;
 And oh! that Helen's house had, one and all,
 Died as he died, for she hath many slain,
 Who, like my master, went to seek renown
 For Agamemnon in the fields of Troy.

So saying, he girdled quick his tunick close,
 And, issuing, sought the styes; thence bringing two
 Of the imprison'd herd, he slaughter'd both, 90
 Sing'd them, and slash'd and spitted them, and plac'd
 The whole well-roasted banquet, spits and all,
 Reeking before Ulysses; last, with flour
 He sprinkled them, and, filling with rich wine
 His ivy-goblet, opposite repos'd,
 And thus, encouraging his guest, began:

Now, stranger, eat. A servant's homely fare
 I set before thee; for the fatted swine,
 Nor fearing vengeance, nor by pity sway'd,
 The suitors elaim. But their injurious deeds 100
 The blessed Gods approve not; they respect
 The just and righteous of mankind alone.
 The worst and fiercest, when they seek for spoil
 A foreign shore, and by consent of Jove
 Seize much, their ships once laden, panic-struck,
 Lest vengeance intercept them, haste away.
 But these men must have surely learnt from Heav'n
 His woful end, since neither they vouchsafe
 To woo with decency, nor to depart,
 Each to his home, but, destitute alike 110
 Of shame and fear, unsparingly devour

What yet remains, now threat'ning waste of all.
 Jove ne'er hath giv'n us yet the night or day,
 When with a single victim, or with two,
 They would content them, and his empty jars
 Witness how fast the squand'ers use his wine.
 Time was, when he was rich indeed; such wealth
 On yonder continent no ruler own'd
 Nor yet in Ithaca; no twenty chiefs
 Could match with all their treasures his alone; 120
 I tell thee their amount. Twelve herds of his
 The mainland graze; as many flocks of sheep;
 Drove of fat swine as num'rous; and his friends
 And hireling swains their nourish for his use
 As many flocks of goats; nor these are all,
 But other goats besides, eleven flocks
 Browse on the margin of his fields at home.
 Myself, the while, attentive watch the breed,
 Which hovel here, and ever, as they thrive,
 Select, at their command, for them, the best. 130

While thus he spake, Ulysses ate and drank
 With eager haste, but silent; for the means
 Of just revenge employ'd his ev'ry thought.
 At length, his raging appetite appeas'd,
 Eumæus gave him, charg'd with wine, the cup
 From which he drank himself; he, glad, receiv'd
 The boon, and in wing'd accents thus began:

And who was he, my friend! by thy report
 So brave and opulent, who purchas'd thee?
 Thou say'st he perish'd for the glory-sake 140
 Of Agamemnon. Name him; for the Gods
 Alone can tell—I may, perchance, have seen,
 And may afford thee tidings of thy lord,
 For I have roam'd, myself, through many a clime.

To whom the noble swineherd thus replied:
 Alas, old man! no trav'ller's tale of him
 Will gain his consort's credence, or his son's;
 For wand'ers, wanting entertainment, forge
 Falsehoods for bread, and wilfully deceive.
 Of all such random guests, none fails to court 150
 With feign'd intelligence the queen's regard;
 She welcomes all, and while she questions each
 Minutely, from her lids lets fall the tear

Of tender grief, as well beseems a wife,
 Whose mate hath perish'd in a distant land.
 Thou couldst thyself, no doubt, my hoary friend !
 (Would any furnish thee with decent vest
 And mantle) fabricate a tale with ease ;
 Yet, doubtless, dogs and fowls of rapid wing
 His bones have bar'd, or fishes of the Deep 160
 Have eaten him, and on the mainland coast
 Whelm'd in deep sands the mould'ring relicts lie.
 So hath he perish'd, to the long regret
 Of all his friends, but most of all to mine,
 For I shall find no master mild as he,
 Though I should seek one even in the house
 Of my own parents. Neither yearns my heart
 So feelingly (though that desiring too)
 To see once more my parents and my home,
 As to behold Ulysses yet again. 170

Him though not present here, my guest ! I name
 With filial rev'rence ; for he lov'd me much,
 Car'd for me much, and, though we meet no more,
 Holds still an elder brother's part in me.

Him answer'd, then, the hero toil-inur'd :
 My friend ! since, hopeless of thy lord's return,
 Thou art thus resolute in unbelief,
 I will not merely say, but I will swear
 Most truly, that Ulysses comes again ;
 And thou shalt clothe me, soon as he arrives, 180
 In recompense of this my gladsome news,
 With a fair vest and mantle, which, although
 Much needing raiment, I, till then, refuse ;
 For, as the gates of Hades, I detest
 The sordid wretch, whom want can tempt to lie.
 Be Jove, of all in Heav'n, my witness first,
 Then this thy hospitable board, and last
 The household Gods of the illustrious chief
 Himself, Ulysses, to whose gates I go,
 That all my words shall surely be fulfill'd. 190
 In this same year Ulysses shall arrive ;
 Ere, this month clos'd, another month succeed,
 He shall return, and punish all who dare
 Insult his consort and his noble son.

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply :

Old friend ! nor cloak nor vest thy gladsome news
 Will ever earn : Ulysses comes no more.
 Drink, therefore, quietly, and seek a theme
 Less painful ; for recalling to my mind
 My noble master, thou hast fill'd afresh 200
 My troubled soul with sorrow for his sake.
 Let the oath rest, and let Ulysses come,
 Ev'n as myself, and as Penelope,
 And as his ancient father, and his son
 Godlike Telemachus, all wish he may.
 Ay—there I feel again—nor cease to mourn
 His son Telemachus ; who, when the Gods
 Had rear'd him as they rear a thriving plant,
 And I well hop'd, that neither in his mind
 Nor person he should aught inferiour prove 210
 To his illustrious sire, bereft, alas !
 By some strange influence, human or divine,
 Of all sound intellect, hath roam'd away
 To Pylus, seeking information there
 Of his lost father ; and the suitors watch,
 Mean time, in ambush lurking, his return,
 That the last hope of all Arcesias' house
 May perish, and the race for ever fail.
 But leave we, whether he be snar'd and slain
 (Whom Jove protect !) or whether he escape, 220
 Him also.—Now, my venerable friend !
 Rehearse, with undissembling truth, the tale
 Of thy own sorrows.—Whence art thou, and who ?
 Born in what city, from what parents sprung ?
 What force of well-tim'd oars impell'd the bark
 Which brought thee ? Of what country were the crew ?
 And why, an alien, wast thou landed here ?
 For, not on foot thou cam'st, full well I know.

Him answer'd, then, Ulysses ever-wise :
 I will with truth resolve thee ; and if here 230
 Within thy cottage sitting, we had wine
 And food for many a day, and business none,
 But to regale at ease while others toil'd,
 I could exhaust with ease the circling year
 Complete, my woes rehearsing, and at last
 Leave unrehears'd large portion of the toil
 And anguish, by the Gods assign'd to me.

I boast me sprung from ancestry renown'd
In spacious Crete; son of a wealthy sire,
Who rear'd a num'rous offspring at his home 240
Born in pure wedlock; but an humbler mate,
His purchas'd concubine, gave birth to me.
Yet me, not less than those more nobly born,
Castor Hylacides esteem'd and lov'd,
For him I boast my father. Him in Crete,
While yet he liv'd, all rev'renc'd as a God,
So rich, so prosp'rous, and so blest was he
With sons of highest praise. But death, the doom
Of all, him bore to Pluto's drear abode,
And his illustrious sons among themselves 250
Portion'd his goods by lot; to me, indeed,
They gave a dwelling, and but little more;
Yet, for my virtuous qualities, I won
A wealthy bride; for no degen'rate stain
Dishonour'd *me*, nor was I known to fear
Whatever foe, though now bereft of all.
But mark the stubble, and thou canst not much
Misjudge the grain; in truth I have endur'd
Much tribulation; heap'd and heavy woes.
Courage and phalanx-breaking might had I 260
From Mars and Pallas; and, what time I drew,
Planning some dread exploit, an ambush forth
Of our most valiant chiefs, no boding fears
Of death seiz'd *me*, but foremost far of all
I sprang to fight, and pierc'd the flying foe.
Such was I once in arms. But household toils
Sustain'd for children's sake, and carking cares
T' enrich a family, my soul disdain'd.
My pleasures were the gallant bark, the din
Of battle, the smooth spear and glitt'ring shaft, 270
Objects of dread to others, but which me
The Gods dispos'd to love and to enjoy,
For diff'rent minds are diff'rently amus'd.
Ere yet the Greecian fleet had sail'd to Troy,
Nine times was I commander of a host
Embark'd against a foreign foe, and led
My valiant bands, each time, victorious home.
From the whole booty, first, what pleas'd me most
Choosing, and sharing also much by lot

I rapidly grew rich, and had thenceforth 280
Among the Cretans rev'rence and respect.
But when loud-thund'ring Jove that voyage dire
Ordain'd, which loos'd the knees of many a Greek,
Then to Idomeneus and me they gave
The charge of all their fleet, which how to avoid
We found not, so importunate the cry
Of the whole host impell'd us to the task.
There fought we nine long years, and in the tenth
(Priam's proud city pillag'd) sought again,
But, through dissension kindled from above, 290
With disunited fleets, our sev'ral homes.
Then Jove, dread Governor of all, devis'd
For me much evil. One short month alone
Giv'n to domestic pleasures, I enjoy'd
My wife, my children, and my plenteous gains,
Then suddenly resolv'd with sev'ral ships
Well-rigg'd, and furnish'd all with gallant crews,
To sail for Ægypt; nine I fitted forth,
To which stout mariners assembled fast.
Six days the chosen part'ners of my voyage 300
Feasted, to whom I num'rous victims gave
For sacrifice, and for their own regale.
Embarking on the seventh from spacious Crete,
And wafted by a gentle Northern gale,
We glided easily along, as down
A river's stream; nor one of all my ships
Encounter'd harm, nor any sickness seiz'd
My people, but before the friendly blast
Secure we steer'd, and, sitting, plough'd the Deep.
Five days elaps'd, my galleys nine I moor'd 310
All safe within the Nile's smooth-flowing stream,
And, charging my companions not to stray,
But closely guard the ships, selected some,
Who should ascend the rising-grounds, and thence
Descry the country; but on evil bent,
And unrestrain'd by fear, these flew, at once,
To rapine; wasted the delightful fields
Of the Ægyptians, captive brought away
Their wives and little ones, and slew the men.
The city soon alarm'd, at early dawn 320
Forth came the citizens, both horse and foot,

And with the splendour of their dazzling arms
Fill'd all the plain. Then Jove with panic dread
Possess'd my people; none found courage more,
To stand, for mischiefs swarm'd on ev'ry side.
There num'rous by the glitt'ring spear we fell,
While others they conducted thence alive
To toilsome servitude. But Jove himself
Me prompted (oh that I had first expir'd
In Ægypt! for new sorrow soon ensu'd) 330
To loose my brazen helmet, and to lay
My shield, put off, beside it on the ground,
To cast away my spear, and, seeking next
The chariot of the king, to clasp his knees,
And kiss them. He, by my submission mov'd,
Deliver'd me, and, to his chariot-seat
Raising, convey'd me weeping to his home.
With many an ashen spear his warriors sought
To slay me (for they now grew fiery-wroth),
But he, though fear of hospitable Jove, 340
Chief punisher of wrong, my life preserv'd.
Sev'n years I there abode, and much amass'd
Among the Ægyptians, gifted by them all;
But, in the eighth revolving year, arriv'd
A shrewd Phœnician, hungry, wont to feed
His craving avarice at others' cost,
And who had injur'd many. Me, by guile,
This man seduc'd, to leave my peaceful home,
And seek with him Phœnicia, where he dwelt
And treasur'd all his gains. A year entire 350
His inmate I remain'd, and when the year
Its course renew'd, to Libya, with pretence
That I should share the freight, but with design
By sale of me t' enrich himself alone,
He bore me, jealous, but constrain'd to go.
Fresh blew the North and cloudless, and the ship
Ran through the middle sea before the gale.
Soon clearing Crete. But Jove destruction plann'd
And death for them; for, Crete now left afar,
And other land than Crete appearing none, 360
But sky alone and sea, right o'er their heads
A gloomy cloud he brought. Black hung the storm,
And darken'd all the Deep. Then, thund'ring oft,

He hurl'd his candent bolts into the ship.
She, quaking all her length, with sulphur reek'd,
And plunging headlong o'er her shatter'd sides
Together, on the boist'rous waves the crew
Like seamews rode, forbidden by that stroke
Of wrath divine to hope their country more.
But Jove himself, that I might still survive, 370
Gave me, in my extreme distress, to seize
The huge unwieldy mast, to which I clung
With folded arms, and drove before the gale.
Nine days I grasp'd the beam, and, on the tenth,
The rolling billows bore me to the coast
Of the Thesprotians. There, the bounteous king,
The hero Phidon, at his proper cost
Refresh'd me; for his own illustrious son,
Arriving where I lay with cold and toil
Well-nigh expiring, rais'd me with his hand, 380
And led me to his royal father's house,
Who cherish'd me, and gave me fresh attire.
There heard I of Ulysses, whom himself
Had entertain'd, he said, on his return
To his own land; he show'd me also gold,
Brass, and bright steel, with all that in his course
Ulysses had amass'd, a store to feed
The household of a less renown'd than he
To the tenth generation, so immense
His treasures in the royal palace lay. 390
Of him he spake, as to Dodona gone,
T' implore Jove's counsel in his oaken bow'rs,
Whether, so late returning, he should reach
His kingdom openly, or in disguise.
To me the monarch swore, in his own hall
Pouring libation, that the ship was launch'd,
And the crew ready for his conduct home.
But me he first dismiss'd, for, as it chanc'd,
A galley of Thesprotia lay prepar'd,
To seek Dulichium, and he charg'd the crew, 400
That they should give me safely to the care
Of king Acastus. But with other thoughts
Their bosoms teem'd, that I might yet sustain
Mis'ries surpassing all that I had known.
For when the bark had left the land afar,

Confed'rate with each other they conspir'd
 Against my liberty; they stripp'd my vest
 And mantle, and this tatter'd raiment base
 Gave me instead, a tunick and a cloak
 Foul past endurance, as thyself mayst see. 410

At eventide reaching the cultur'd coast
 Of Ithaca, they left me bound on board
 With tackle of the bark, and, quitting ship
 Themselves, made hasty supper on the shore.
 But me the Gods themselves with ease releas'd
 From that constraint, and winding close my rags
 Around my brows, and sliding by the smooth
 And slipp'ry rudder down into the Deep,
 I laid my bosom gently on the waves.

With both hands oaring thence my course, I swam 420
 Till past all ken of theirs; then landing where
 Thick covert of luxuriant trees I mark'd,
 Close couchant down I lay; they, mutt'ring loud,
 Pac'd to and fro, but, deeming farther search
 Unprofitable, soon embark'd again.

Thus, baffling all their search with ease, the Gods
 Conceal'd, and to a wise man's cottage thence
 Conducted me, ordain'd not yet to die.

To whom Eumæus answer thus return'd:
 Alas, my guest! thy wand'rings and thy woes, 430
 Recited thus at large, have mov'd me much.

But, speaking of Ulysses, thou hast pass'd
 All credence; I at least can yield thee none.
 Why, noble as thou art, shouldst thou invent
 These idle falsehoods? as for the return

Of my regretted lord, myself I know,
 That all the Pow'rs of Heav'n with hate pursu'd
 My master; he had else in battle died
 At Ilium, or, the siege of Ilium clos'd,
 In the embraces of his friends at home. 440

Then universal Greece had rais'd his tomb,
 And he had even for his son achiev'd
 Immortal glory; but, alas! by beaks
 Of harpies torn, unseemly sight, he lies.
 I live, the while, sequester'd here, and make
 These herds my constant care, nor ever seek
 The city, save when summon'd by the queen,

Discreet Penelope, that I may learn
 New tidings, from what land soever brought.
 Then all, alike inquisitive, attend, 450
 Both who regret the absence of our king,
 And who rejoice gratuitous to gorge
 His substance. But propension none have I,
 Or curious appetite, to such reports,
 Since an Ætolian cozen'd me, who found
 (After long wand'ring over various lands,
 A fugitive for blood) my lone retreat.
 Him here I welcom'd, and with open arms
 Receiv'd, when he affirm'd, that he had seen
 My master with Idomeneus in Crete 460
 His ships refitting shatter'd by a storm,
 And that in summer with his godlike band
 He would return, great riches bringing home,
 Or else in autumn. And thou, ancient guest
 Forlorn! since thee the Gods have hither led,
 Seek not to gratify me with untruths,
 And to deceive me; since for no such cause
 I shall respect or love thee, but alone
 By pity sway'd, and for obedience-sake
 To the demands of hospitable Jove. 470

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied:
 Thou hast, in truth, a most incred'lous mind,
 Whom even with an oath I have not won
 To give me credence. Come then—we will each
 Engage by cov'nant, which the Pow'rs of Heav'n
 Shall witness and confirm on either part,
 Thou, that if he, thy master, shall arrive
 At this thy dwelling, thou shalt send me, then,
 In vest and mantle decently attir'd,
 Hence to Dulichium, whither I would go. 480
 And I, thy lord not coming as I say,
 That ye shall hurl me downright from the rocks,
 Thou and thy servants, that in times to come
 The poor and destitute may fear to lie.

To whom the gen'rous swineherd in return:
 My friend! well spoken—doubtless I should win
 Immortal praise from all, for true desert
 And virtue, slaying the defenceless man,
 Whom I had first invited to my board,

And with great boldness I should pray to Jove— 490
 But the hour calls to supper, and my swains
 Now seek the cottage, ready to provide
 The sav'ry viands for our ev'ning fare.

Scarce had he spoken, when the swains approach'd,
 Driving their herds. Within their wonted pens
 They shut them fast for sleep, and hubbub wild
 Of the imprison'd multitudes ensu'd.

Then call'd Eumæus to the youths aloud:
 Bring ye the best, that we may set him forth
 Before my foreign friend, with whom ourselves 500
 Will also feast, who find the stubborn race
 A painful charge, while others, at no cost
 Of labour, riot in the fruits of ours.

So saying, his wood for fuel he prepar'd,
 And, dragging thither a well-fatted brawn
 Of the fifth year, his servants held him fast
 At the hearth side. Nor fail'd the master swain,
 T' adore the Gods (for wise and good was he),
 But, consecration of the victim first
 Himself performing, cast into the fire 510
 The forehead bristles of the tusky boar,
 And pray'd to all above, that safe, at length,
 Ulysses might regain his native home.
 Then with an oaken shive, which he had left
 Beside the fire, he smote him, and he fell.
 Next piercing him, and scorching close his hair,
 The joints they parted, and with slices crude,
 Cut neatly from the separated limbs,
 Eumæus spread the caul, which, sprinkled o'er
 With purest meal, he cast into the fire. 520

The remnant slash'd, and spitted, and prepar'd,
 They plac'd, heap'd high in chargers, on the board.
 Then rose the good Eumæus to his task
 Of distribution, for by none excell'd
 In all the duties of a host was he.
 Sev'n-fold partition of the banquet made,
 He gave, with previous pray'r, to Maia's son
 And to the nymphs one portion, and the guests
 Serv'd next, but, honouring Ulysses most,
 On him the long unsever'd chine bestow'd. 530
 By that distinction just his master's heart

He gratified, and thus the hero spake :

Eumæus ! be thou as belov'd of Jove,
As thou art dear to me, whom, though attir'd
So coarsely, thou hast serv'd with such respect !

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply :
Eat, noble stranger ! and refreshment take
Such as thou mayst ; God gives, and God denies
At his own will, for he is lord of all.

He spake, and of the food untasted yet, 510
Part off'ring to the Gods, libation pour'd,
And to Ulysses, town-destroying chief,
Now seated in his place, the goblet gave.
With bread Mesaulius serv'd them. Him the swain,
Eumæus, in the absence of his lord,
Had purchas'd, aided neither by the queen
Nor the old lord, Laertes, from on board
A Taphian, at his own peculiar cost.
These rights perform'd, all stretch'd their eager hands
Toward the banquet, and, the keen desires 550
Of hunger sated, and the thirst of each,
Mesaulius clear'd the board, which now the hinds,
Full-fed, relinquish'd willingly to seek
Their sev'ral beds. Black came a moonless night,
And Jove all night descending fast in show'rs,
With howlings of the ever wat'ry West.
Ulysses, at that sound, for trial's sake
Of his good host, if putting off his cloak
He would accommodate him, or require
That service for him at some other hand, 560
Addressing thus the family, began :

Hear now, Eumæus, and ye other swains,
His fellow lab'rers ! I shall somewhat boast,
By wine befool'd, which forces ev'n the wise,
To carol loud, to titter, and to dance,
And speak what oft were better far suppress'd.
But, since I have begun, I shall proceed,
Prating my fill. Ah might those days return,
With all the youth and strength that I enjoy'd,
When ambush'd once on Ilium's plains we lay, 570
Ulysses, Menelaus, and myself,
By their election, leaders of the band.
Approaching to the city's lofty wall

Through tangled bushes and the reeds that gird
 The bulwarks, down we laid us in the marsh,
 Beneath our arms. Then, Boreas blowing loud,
 A rueful night of nipping frost ensu'd,
 With snow that blanch'd us thick as morning rime,
 And ev'ry shield with ice was crystall'd o'er.
 The rest, with cloaks and vests well cover'd, slept 580
 Beneath their bucklers; I alone my cloak,
 Improvident, had left behind, no thought
 Conceiving of a season so severe,
 And cov'ring none save shield and zone had I.
 The night, at length, nigh spent, and all the stars
 Declining in their course, with elbow thrust
 Against Ulysses' side I rous'd the chief,
 And thus address'd him ever prompt to hear:

Laertes' noble son, for wiles renown'd!
 I freeze to death. O, help! or I am lost. 590
 No cloak have I; some evil demon, sure,
 Beguil'd me of all prudence, that I came
 Thus sparsely clad; I shall, I must expire.

So I; he, ready as he was in arms
 And counsel both, the remedy at once
 Devis'd, and in a whisper thus replied:

Hush! lest perchance some other hear—he said;
 And, leaning on his elbow, spake aloud:

My friends! all hear—a monitory dream
 Hath reach'd me—We have left the ships afar— 600
 Haste, therefore, one of you, with my request
 To Agamemnon, sov'reign in command,
 That he would reinforce us from the camp.

He spake, and at the word, Andraemon's son,
 Thoas, arose, who, casting off his cloak,
 Flew to the ships, and cheerful and refresh'd
 The morning found me, wrapp'd in his attire.
 O for the vigour of such youth again!
 Then, some good peasant here would spare a cloak,
 Mov'd both by friendship and respect to one, 610
 Whom now, thus old and squalid, ye despise.

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply:
 My friend! rehearsing thus Ulysses' praise,
 Thou hast so pleas'd me, that thou shalt not find
 Th' effect unpleasant to thyself. No want

Of cov'ring, therefore, or of aught beside
Needful to solace penury like thine,
Shall harm thee here ; yet at the peep of dawn
Gird thy own tatters to thy loins again ;
For *we* have no great store of cloaks to boast, 620
And, as for vests, none more than each his own.
But when Ulysses' son shall once arrive,
He will himself with mantle and with vest
Supply, and send thee whither most thou wouldst.

So saying, he rose, and nearer made his couch
To the hearth side, well thick'ning it with skins
Of sheep and goats ; then lay the hero down,
O'er whom a shaggy mantle large he threw,
Which ofttimes serv'd him with a change, when rough
The winter's blast and terrible arose. 630

So was Ulysses bedded, and the youths
Slept all beside him ; but the master-swain
Chose not his place of rest so far remote
From his rude charge, but issu'd arm'd abroad,
Gladd'ning Ulysses' heart that he had left
His herds with one so faithful to his trust.
Athwart his sturdy shoulders first he slung
His falchion bright, then wrapp'd him in a cloak
Thick-woven, winter-proof ; a goatskin, next
Of amplest size and thickest shagg'd with hair 640
He lifted, and a light keen javelin last,
With which he kept aloof the threaten'd force
Of dogs and men. Thus arm'd, his couch he sought
Beside the cavern, where his sleeping herds
Lay warm, and from the Northern blast secure.

BOOK XV.

Argument.

Telemachus, admonished by Minerva, takes leave of Menelaus, but, ere he sails, is accosted by Theoclymenus, a prophet of Argos, whom at his earnest request he takes on board. In the mean time Eumæus relates to Ulysses the means by which he came to Ithaca. Telemachus, arriving there, gives orders for the return of his bark to the city, and repairs himself to Eumæus.

MEAN time to Lacedæmon's spacious vale
Minerva went, that she might summon thence
Ulysses' glorious offspring to his home.
Telemachus and Nestor's son she found
In Menelaus' vestibule repos'd,
Pisistratus in gentle sleep immers'd,
But not the gen'rous Ithacan; his mind
No rest enjoy'd, by filial cares disturb'd
Amid the silent night; when, drawing near
To his couch' side, the Goddess thus began: 10
Telemachus! it were a deed unwise,
To sojourn longer here, thy fair demesnes
Abandon'd, and those haughty suitors left
Within thy walls; fear lest, partition made
Of thy possessions, they consume them all,
And in the end thy voyage bootless prove.
Delay not; from brave Menelaus ask
Dismission hence, that thou mayst find at home
Thy spotless mother, whom her brethren urge
And her own father even now to wed 20
Eurymachus, in gifts and in amount
Of proffer'd dow'r superiour to the rest.
Some treasure, else, shall haply from thy stores
Be taken, such as thou wilt grudge to spare.
For well thou know'st how woman is dispos'd;

Her whole anxiety is to increase
 His substance whom she weds ; no care hath she
 Of her first children, or remembers more
 The buried husband of her virgin choice.
 Haste then, and to the woman of thy train 30
 Whom thou shalt most approve, consign the charge
 Of thy domestic int'rests, till the Gods
 Themselves shall guide thee to a noble wife.
 This farther counsel also well deserves
 Thy special notice. In the narrow frith,
 Samos the rude and Ithaca between,
 The chief of all thy mother's suitors wait
 In closest ambush, urg'd by fierce desire
 To slay thee, ere thou reach thy native shore ;
 But first, or I misjudge, the tomb shall hide 40
 All those lewd revellers at thy expense.
 Yet steer thy galley from those isles afar,
 And voyage make by night ; some guardian God
 Shall waft thee on, and watch and keep thee safe.
 Then, soon as thou attain'st the nearest shore
 Of Ithaca, dispatching to the town
 Thy bark with all thy people, seek at once
 The swineherd ; for Eumæus is thy friend.
 There sleep, and to the city speed him forth
 With tidings to the queen, that thou hast pass'd 50
 From Pylus safely to thy native shores.

She said, and sought th' Olympian heights sublime.
 Then from sweet sleep awak'ning with his heel
 The son of Nestor, him he thus address'd :

Rise, Nestor's son, Pisistratus ! lead forth
 The steeds, and yoke them. We must now depart.

To whom the son of Nestor thus replied :
 Telemachus ! what haste soe'er we feel,
 We can by no means prudently attempt
 To drive by night, and soon it will be dawn. 60
 Depart not, therefore, now, but patient wait,
 Till Menelaus, Atreus' mighty son,
 With gifts of honour in the chariot plac'd
 And kind farewell dismiss thee ; for the gifts
 Of an ungrudging host through life inspire
 His guest with thoughts of gratitude and love.

Scarce had he spoken, when, the golden dawn

Appearing, Menelaus, from the side
 Of beauteous Helen newly ris'n, approach'd;
 Whose coming when Telemachus perceiv'd, 70
 The hero, putting on his splendid vest
 With brisk dispatch, and o'er his shoulders broad
 Casting his graceful mantle, at the door
 Receiv'd him, and his wishes thus express'd:

Atrides, Menelaus, glorious chief!
 Now let it please thee, that I seek again
 My native shores, for now would I depart.

Him answer'd Menelaus fam'd in arms:
 Telemachus! I will not long delay
 Thy wish'd return. I disapprove alike 80
 The host, whose assiduity extreme
 Distresses, and whose negligence offends;
 The middle course is best; alike we err,
 Him thrusting forth whose wish is to remain,
 And hind'ring the impatient to depart.
 This only is true kindness—To regale
 The present guest, and speed him when he would.
 Yet stay, till thou shalt see my splendid gifts
 Plac'd in thy chariot, and till I command
 My women from our present stores to spread 90
 The table with a plentiful repast.
 For both the honour of the guest demands,
 And his convenience also, that he eat
 Sufficient, ent'ring on a length of road.
 But wouldst thou travel, so that I would share
 Myself thy journey, through the midst of Greece,
 I will conduct thee drawn by steeds of mine
 To many a city, and from none of all
 Ungifted shall we go, but shall in each
 Some boon receive, a charger, it may chance, 100
 Or brazen tripod, or a golden cup,
 Or, fitly match'd, two mules, a sturdy pair.

To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied:
 Atrides, Menelaus, chief renown'd!
 I would at once depart (for guardian none
 Of my possessions have I left behind),
 Lest, while I seek my father, I be lost
 Myself, or lose what I should grudge to spare.

Which when the valiant Menelaus heard,

He bade his spouse and her attendant maids 110
Set forth at once refreshments on the board,
Such as their present stores might well supply.

Then Eteoneus came, Boetheus' son,
Newly aris'n, for nigh at hand he dwelt,
Whom Menelaus charg'd to kindle fire,
By which to dress their food, and he obey'd.
He next himself his fragrant chamber sought,
Not sole, but by his spouse and by his son
Attended, Megapenthes. There arriv'd

Amidst his choicest treasures, he produc'd 120
Himself a goblet first, and next consign'd
An argent beaker to the prince's hand.

Mean time beside her coffers Helen stood
Fill'd with rich mantles, variegated works
Of her own hand. The mantle of them all
Widest and most magnificent, a star
In splendour, and which lay below the rest,
The beauteous spouse of Menelaus chose,
And all, proceeding through the palace, sought
Telemachus again, whom reaching, thus 130
The hero of the golden locks began :

May Juno's mate, the Thund'rer, such return
Grant thee, Telemachus, as thou desir'st !
Behold, I give thee from my precious stores
The richest and the noblest treasure there—
I give thee this bright beaker, argent all,
But round encircled with a lip of gold.
It is the work of Vulcan, which to me
The hero Phædimus presented, king
Of the Sidonians, when, on my return, 140
Beneath his roof I lodg'd. I make it thine.

So saying, Menelaus in his hands
The goblet plac'd, and Megapenthes next
The beaker set before him. Last of all
Helen the mantle brought, and thus she said :

Accept, my son, this also. Seeing this,
Call me to mind who wove it, and present
This mantle, in the joyful nuptial hour,
To thy fair bride, reposing it, the while,
In thy own mother's keeping. Now, farewell ! 150
Prosp'rous and happy be thy voyage home !

She spake, and gave it to him. He the boon
 Receiv'd with gladness, and his noble friend,
 Pisistratus, within the chariot-chest
 Dispos'd the sev'ral gifts. This done, their host,
 The glorious Menelaus, to his hall
 Led them again, where each his former seat,
 Exalted throne, or softer couch, resum'd.
 A maiden then, with golden ewer charg'd
 And silver bowl, pour'd water on their hands, 160
 And spread the polish'd table, which with food
 Various, selected from her present stores,
 The mistress of the household charge supplied.
 Boethus' son stood carver, and to each
 His portion gave, while Megapenthes, son
 Of glorious Menelaus, serv'd the cup.
 Then all with outstretch'd hands the feast assail'd,
 And when nor hunger more nor thirst they felt,
 Telemachus and Hestor's noble son
 Then join'd the rapid steeds, and, mounting, drove
 Through vestibule and sounding porch abroad. 171
 Forth issu'd also, bearing in his hand
 A golden goblet of delicious wine,
 The hero of the golden locks; resolv'd,
 That not without libation first perform'd
 They should depart; he stood before the steeds,
 And drinking first, thus, courteous, them bespake:
 Health to yourselves, my children! and I wish
 Much health (so tell him) to my glorious friend,
 The hoary Nestor, ever, while we warr'd 180
 At Ilium, as a father kind to me.
 To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied:
 And doubtless so we will; nor aught suppress
 Of all thy gracious words, or bounteous deeds,
 Arriv'd in Pylus; and I would to Heav'n
 That, reaching home, I might as sure report
 All to my father there, as I have found
 Beneath thy roof much friendship, and depart
 Enrich'd with many a noble gift by thee!
 While thus he spake, on his right hand appear'd
 An eagle; in his talons pounc'd he bore 191
 A white-plum'd goose domestic, newly ta'en
 From the house-court. Men, women, all alike,

With shouts pursu'd him; but the fearless bird,
 Approaching first the chariot, on the right,
 And close before it, sprang into the skies.
 That sight rejoicing and with hearts reviv'd
 They view'd, and thus Pisistratus his speech
 Amid them all to Menelaus turn'd :

Now Menelaus, think, illustrious chief ! 200
 If us, this omen, or thyself regard.

While warlike Menelaus musing stood
 What answer fit to frame, his spouse mean time,
 Fair Helen, thus preventing him, began :

Hear me; for I will answer as the Gods
 Teach me, and as I think shall come to pass.
 As he, descending from his place of birth,
 The mountains, caught our pamper'd goose away,
 So shall Ulysses, after num'rous toils
 And wand'rings, punish all his foes at home, 210
 Perhaps sits framing, even now, the means
 Of due revenge, arriv'd already there.

To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied :
 Juno's loud-thund'ring spouse confirm the word !
 And I will worship thee as we adore
 The Gods themselves, with sacrifice and praise.

He said, and lash'd the coursers; fiery they,
 And fleet, sprang through the city to the plain.
 Thus, journeying, they shook on either side
 The yoke all day, and when the setting sun 220
 To dusky ev'ning had resign'd the roads,
 At Pheræ they arriv'd, and at the house
 Where dwelt Diocles, whose illustrious sire,
 Orsilochus, from Alpheus sprang, repos'd.
 But when Aurora, daughter of the Dawn,
 Look'd rosy forth, then, binding to the yoke
 Their steeds again, they mounted. Nestor's son
 Urg'd through the vestibule and sounding porch
 His willing coursers, and the lofty tow'rs
 Of Pylus soon they saw ; when thus his friend, 230
 Pisistratus, Ulysses' son bespake :

What words, Pisistratus ! shall I employ,
 That may prevail, to win thy kind consent
 To my request ? The friendship that descends
 From sire to son, Jove's ordinance, is ours.

Our years are equal, and this journey, last,
 Shall serve t' endear us mutually the more.
 Me bear not, I conjure thee, noble friend !
 Beyond the ship, but drop me where she lies,
 Lest ancient Nestor, though against my will, 240
 Detain me in his palace through desire
 To feast me, for I dread the least delay.

He spake ; then mus'd Pisistratus how best
 He might effect the wishes of his friend,
 And thus at length resolv'd ; turning his steeds
 With sudden deviation to the shore,
 He sought the bark, and, placing in the stern
 Both gold and raiment, the illustrious gifts
 Of Menelaus, thus, in accents wing'd
 With ardour, urg'd Telemachus away : 250

Dispatch, embark, command thy crew on board,
 Ere my arrival notice give of thine
 To the old king ; for vehement I know
 His temper, neither will he let thee hence,
 But, hasting hither, will himself enforce
 Thy longer stay, lest thou depart the coast
 Ungifted ; nought will fire his anger more.

He ended, lash'd his steeds, the city sought,
 And soon arriv'd at home. Mean time, his crew
 Exhorting, thus Telemachus exclaim'd : 260

My comrades ! fix the mast, extend the sail,
 And climb the bark, for I would now return.

He spake ; they heard him gladly, and at once
 All fill'd the benches. While his voyage he
 Thus expedited, and beside the stern
 To Pallas sacrifice perform'd and pray'd,
 A stranger, born remote who had escap'd
 From Argos, fugitive for blood, a seer,
 And of Melampus' progeny, approach'd.
 Melampus, in old time, in Pylus dwelt, 270
 Mother of flocks, alike for wealth renown'd
 And the magnificence of his abode.

He, flying mighty Neleus, first of men,
 Exchang'd his country for a foreign land,
 And Neleus occupied his ample means
 A year complete, possessing them by force.

Melampus in the house of Phylacus
 Endur'd, mean time, imprisonment and wo,
 And burn'd with wrath for Neleus' daughter's sake
 By fell Erynnis kindled in his heart. 280
 But, scaping death, he drove the lowing beeves
 From Phylace to Pylus, well aveng'd
 His injuries at Neleus' hands sustain'd,
 And gave to his defrauded brother's arms,
 King Neleus' daughter fair, the promis'd bride.
 To steed-fam'd Argos next he bent his way,
 There mark'd by Fate, t' inhabit and to rule
 Achaia's num'rous people. In that land
 He married, built a palace, and became
 The father of two valiant sons, by name 290
 Antiphates and Mantius. To the first
 Was born Oicleus; and from Oicleus sprang
 Amphiaraüs, warlike chief renown'd,
 Whom with all tenderness, and as a friend,
 Alike the Thund'rer and Apollo priz'd;
 Yet reach'd he not the bounds of hoary age,
 But, by his mercenary consort's arts
 Urg'd thither, died at Thebes. Two sons he left
 Alcmaëon and Amphilocho; and two,
 Left also Mantius, of undying fame, 300
 Clytus and Polyphides. Clytus pass'd
 From Earth to Heav'n, and dwells among the Gods,
 Stol'n by Aurora for his beauty's sake.
 But (brave Amphiaraüs once deceas'd)
 Phœbus exalted Polyphides far
 Above all others in the prophet's part.
 He, anger'd by his father, roam'd away
 To Hyperesia, where he dwelt renown'd
 Throughout all lands, the oracle of all.

His son, nam'd Theoclymenus, was he 310
 Who now approach'd; Ulysses' son he found
 Libation off'ring in his bark, and pray'r,
 And in wing'd accents ardent him address'd:

Sir! since I find thee sacrificing here,
 By these most hallow'd rites, and by the Gods,
 And as thou liv'st thyself, and hope'st the lives
 Of these thy people, I conjure thee, solve

My questions speedily, nor hide the truth.
Who art thou? whence? where born? and sprung
from whom?

To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied: 320
I will inform thee, stranger! and will solve
With truth thy questions. Ithacan by birth
I boast myself, and from Ulysses sprung.
But he, alas! hath reach'd a woful end,
And I, believing it, with these have plough'd
The Ocean hither, int'rested to learn
A father's fate, long absent from his home.

Then answer'd godlike Theoclymenus:
I also wander, and must leave afar
My native home; for I have slain a chief 330
Of my own tribe in Argos; num'rous friends
And kinsmen had he there, and far and wide
Their pow'r extends. A dreadful death I fear
From their resentment, and have therefore fled,
Doom'd never to return. But thou receive
Thy suppliant, and afford me in thy bark
A refuge, for I deem them near at hand.

Then answer thus Telemachus return'd:
Fear not lest I refuse thee. Welcome share
My voyage, and in Ithaca receive 340
Such entertainment as myself enjoy.

He spake, and at the stranger's hand his spear
Accepting, laid it kindly on the deck,
Then climb'd himself the bark, and, in the stern
His seat resuming, plac'd him at his side.
The moorings loos'd, Telemachus aloud
Exhorted all his followers to the task
Of preparation. They with brisk dispatch
The pine-mast heaving, in the central beam
Infix'd it, and at stern and prow secur'd 350
The tighten'd cords; then, straining at the thongs
Of twisted hide, unfurl'd the shining sail.
Fair wind, through cloudless ether blowing fresh,
Minerva sent them, that the bark might run
Her nimblest course through all the briny way.
Now sank the sun, and dusky ev'ning dimm'd
The waves, when, driven by propitious Jove,

She reach'd the length of Pheræ; thence she
stretch'd

To sacred Elis, where the Epeans rule,
And through the sharp Echinades pursu'd 360
Her rapid course, him bearing doubtful still
Of life or death, surprisal or escape.

Mean time Ulysses and the swineherd ate
Their cottage-mess, and the assistant swains
Theirs also; and when hunger now and thirst
Had ceas'd in all, Ulysses thus began,
Proving the swineherd, whether friendly still,
And anxious for his good, he would entreat
His stay, or hasten him to seek the town:

Eumæus, hear me, and let these thy friends 370
Hear also. Much desire I feel to seek
At early dawn the city, there to beg,
Lest I distress you. But afford me, first,
Needful instructions, and a trusty guide,
Who may conduct me thither; there my task
Must be to roam the streets, and to obtain,
From whom I may, the mendicant's reward,
A little bread, and a few drops to drink.

Ulysses' palace I shall also seek,
And to discreet Penelope report 380
My tidings; neither shall I fail to mix
With those imperious suitors, who, themselves
Full-fed, may spare perhaps some boon to me.
Me shall they find, in whatsoe'er they wish,
Their ready servitor, for (understand
And mark me well) the herald of the skies,
Hermes, from whom all actions of mankind
Receive their grace and polish, is my friend;
So that in menial offices I fear
No rival, whether I be call'd to heap 390
The hearth with fuel, or dry wood to cleave,
To roast, to carve, or to distribute wine,
As oft the poor are wont, who serve the great.

To whom, Eumæus, at those words displeas'd
Thou didst reply: Gods! how could such a thought,
My guest! possess thee? surely thou design'st
Thy own destruction, purposing to seek

Those suitors, and to mingle with a throng,
 Whose impious riot echo to the skies.
 Them no such servitors attend, as thou, 400
 But youths well-cloak'd, well-vested; sleek their
 heads,

And smug their countenances; such alone
 Are their attendants, and the polish'd boards
 Groan overcharg'd with bread, with flesh, with wine.
 Rest here content; for neither me nor these
 Thou weariest aught, and when Ulysses' son
 Shall come, he will with vest and mantle fair
 Attire, and send thee whither most thou wouldst.

To whom, Ulysses, hero toil-inur'd :
 I wish thee, O Eumæus ! dear to Jove 410
 As to myself, for whom thy friendly care
 Provides, that I shall cease, henceforth, to roam
 A wretched mendicant; for anguish none
 Can equal his, who strays by famine urg'd,
 And fears and trembles wheresoe'er he strays.
 Since thou detain'st me then, and bidd'st me wait
 His son's arrival, tell me—lives the sire
 Of brave Ulysses still, whom here he left
 Declining fast into the vale of years ?
 And lives his mother ? or have both deceas'd 420
 Already, and descended to the shades ?

To whom the master swineherd thus replied :
 Hear then, my guest ! the truth. Laertes lives,
 But importuning Jove with ceaseless pray'r
 For speedy riddance of a weary life ;
 Such pangs he suffers for his absent son,
 And for the consort of his early choice,
 Whose death so wrung his heart, that wither'd age
 Invaded him, or ere its date arriv'd.
 She died of sorrow for her glorious son, 430
 And died deplorably ; may never friend
 Of mine, or benefactor, die as she !
 While yet, though worn with mis'ry, she surviv'd,
 With her conversing I could oft abate
 My troubles much ; for in my childish days
 She cherish'd me, and such maternal care,
 Or hardly less, than for her youngest-born,
 The princess Ctimena she felt, vouchsaf'd

Continually to me. With her I grew
 To riper years, and when we both attain'd 440
 Our blooming youth, they gave her to a chief
 Of Samos, who repaid the precious gift
 With countless dow'r. But me, first well-supplied
 With sandals, mantle, vest, she bade forsake
 Ulysses' palace for the distant field,
 Yet lov'd me, so sequester'd, still the more.
 I miss her kindness now ; but gracious Heav'n
 Makes useful to myself my labours here ;
 Hence have I food, and hence I drink, and hence
 Refresh, sometimes, a worthy guest like thee. 450
 But neither gracious word nor bounteous deed
 Can reach me now from her who rules us all,
 So is the house infested with the plague
 Of that lewd throng. Glad would my servants be,
 To reach their mistress' ear, and from herself
 Her pleasure learn ; beneath the royal roof
 To drink and eat, and bring a portion home ;
 For gift and grant make heaviest labour light.

Then answer thus, Ulysses, wise, return'd :
 Alas ! good swain, Eumæus, how remote 460
 From friends and country wast thou forc'd to roam
 Ev'n in thy childish days ? But tell me true.
 The city where thy parents dwelt, did foes
 Despoil it ? or else did some hostile band,
 Surprising thee alone, on herd or flock
 Attendant, bear thee with them o'er the Deep,
 And sell thee at this hero's house, who paid
 Doubtless for *thee* no sordid price or small ?

To whom the master swineherd in reply :
 Stranger ! since thou art curious to be told 470
 My story, silent listen, and thy wine
 At leisure quaff. The nights are longest now,
 And such as time for sleep afford, and time
 For pleasant conf'rence ; neither were it good,
 That thou shouldst seek thy couch or ere the time,
 Since even sleep is hurtful in excess.
 And is their here whom weariness o'erwhelms
 With slumber now, let such a one retire,
 And, on the morrow, let him eat betimes
 His mess, and drive my master's herd abroad. 480

But we, with wine and a well-furnish'd board
 Supplied, will solace mutually derive
 From recollection of our suff'rings past;
 For who hath much endur'd, and wander'd far,
 Finds the recital ev'n of sorrow sweet;
 Now, therefore, hear, for I will tell thee mine.

There is an island (thou hast heard, perchance
 Of such an isle) named Syria; it is plac'd
 Above Ortygia, and a dial owns
 True to the tropic changes of the year. 490

No great extent she boasts, yet is she rich
 In cattle and in flocks, in wheat and wine.
 No famine knows that people, or disease
 Noisome, of all that elsewhere seize the race
 Of miserable man; but when old age
 Steals on the citizens, Apollo, arm'd
 With silver bow, and bright Diana come,
 Whose gentle shafts dismiss them soon to rest.
 Two cities share between them all the isle,
 And both were subject to my father's sway, 500
 Ctesius Ormenides, a godlike chief.

It chanc'd that from Phœnicia, fam'd for skill
 In arts marine, a vessel thither came
 By sharpers mann'd, and laden deep with toys.
 Now in my father's family abode
 A fair Phœnician, tall, full-siz'd, and skill'd
 In works of elegance, whom they beguil'd.
 While she wash'd linen, on the beach, beside
 The ship, a certain mariner of those
 Seduc'd her; for all women, ev'n the wise 510
 And sober, feeble prove by love assail'd.
 Who was she, he inquir'd, and whence? nor she
 Scrupled to tell at once her father's home.

I am of Sidon, famous for her wealth
 By dying earn'd; from Arybas I sprang,
 Rich Arybas. Me Taphian pirates stole
 Returning from the field, and, hither borne
 On board their galley, sold me to the chief
 Of all this island, in whose house I dwell.

Then answer thus her paramour return'd: 520
 Fly now with us, and thou shalt see again

Thy parents in their own high-roof'd abode ;
For still they live, and still are wealthy deem'd.

To whom the damsel : Even that might be,
Would ye, ye seamen, by a solemn oath
Assure me of a safe conveyance home.

Then swear the mariners as she requir'd,
And she, their oath completed, spake again :

Now, silence ! no man, henceforth, of you all
Accost me, though he meet me on the road, 530
Or at yon fountain ; lest some busy tongue
Report it in my ancient master's ear,
Who, with suspicion touch'd, may *me* confine
In cruel bonds, and death contrive for *you*.
But be ye close : provide your stores in haste ;
And when your vessel shall be freighted full,
Quick send me notice ; for I mean to bring
What gold soever opportune I find,
And will my passage cheerfully defray
With still another movable. I nurse 540
The good man's son, an urchin shrewd, of age
To scamper at my side ; him will I bring,
Whom at some foreign market ye shall prove
Saleable at what price soe'er ye will.

So saying, she to my father's house return'd.
They spent the year complete, their vessel's hold
Storing with purchas'd goods of ev'ry kind,
And when, that task perform'd, they needed nought
But to return, their messenger arriv'd,
To summon down the woman to the shore. 550
Then, ent'ring at my father's palace gate,
An artist, such he seem'd, for sale produc'd
Beads of bright amber, rivetted in gold.
My mother (then at home) with all her maids
Handling and gazing on them with delight,
Propos'd to purchase them, and he the nod
Significant gave unobserv'd the while
To the Phœnician woman, and return'd.
She, thus admonish'd, caught my yielding hand
And led me forth. The tables and the cups 560
Left by the lords, my father's daily guests
And followers, in the vestibule she found ;

For they, my sire attending, had with him
 The crowded forum sought. Three cups she seiz'd,
 Which to her bosom nimbly she convey'd,
 And bore them off. An unsuspecting child
 I pac'd beside her. Ev'ning now embrown'd
 The winding paths, and we, with hasty steps
 Descending to the port, erelong arriv'd
 Where the wide-sail'd Phœnician galley lay. 570
 They plac'd us both, then, ent'ring, swiftly cleav'd
 Their liquid road, by favourable gales,
 Jove's gift, impell'd. Six days we day and night
 Continual sail'd, but when Saturnian Jove
 Now bade the sev'nth bright morn illumine the skies,
 Then shaft-arm'd Dian struck the woman dead.
 She headlong pitch'd at once into the bilge
 Like a sea-coot; whence heaving her again,
 The seamen gave her to be fishes' food,
 And I surviv'd to mourn her. But the winds 580
 And rolling billows bore them to the coast
 Of Ithaca, where with his proper goods
 Laertes purchas'd me; and thus it chanc'd
 That e'er I saw this isle, my present home.

To whom Ulysses, glorious chief, replied:
 Eumæus! thou hast mov'd me much, thy woes
 Enumerating thus at large. But Jove
 Hath neighbour'd all thy evil with this good,
 That after num'rous sorrows thou hast reach'd
 The house of a kind master, at whose hands 590
 Thy sustenance is sure, and here thou lead'st
 A tranquil life; but I have late arriv'd,
 City after city of the world explor'd.

Thus mutual they conferr'd, nor leisure found
 Save for short sleep, by morning soon surpris'd.
 Telemachus, mean time, approaching land,
 His gallant friends at once cast loose the sail,
 Lower'd the mast, and oar'd the vessel in.
 Her anchors heav'd aground, and hawsers tied
 Secure, themselves, forth-issuing on the shore, 600
 Breakfast prepar'd, and charg'd their cups with wine.
 When neither hunger now nor thirst remain'd
 Unsatisfied, Telemachus began:

Push ye the sable bark without delay

Home to the city. I will to the field
Among my shepherds, and my rural works
Survey'd, at eve will to the town return.
To morrow will I set before you wine
And plenteous viands, wages of your toil.

Then godlike Theoclymenus inquir'd : 610
Whither must I, my son? whose house, of all
The chiefs in Ithaca, shall me receive?
Shall I directly to the queen's and thine?

Then thus Telemachus, discreet, replied:
I would invite thee to proceed at once
To our abode, since nought should fail thee there
Of kind reception, but it were a course
Unsafe for thee, since elsewhere I must seek
Myself a lodging now, nor will the queen,
My mother, see thee, for she rarely leaves 620
Her own retirement, but, the suitors' eyes
Avoiding, sits continual at the loom.
But thou mayst safely seek another chief,
By name Eurymachus, the noble son
Of Polybus, whom all, with one consent,
In all our island, rev'rence as a God.
Far nobler than the rest is he, and seeks
More ardent than his rivals far, to wed
My mother, and to fill my father's throne.
But long or e'er those nuptials shall arrive, 630
A day, perchance, with direst evil fraught
Shall find them all.—The Thund'rer only knows.

To him thus speaking, on the right appear'd
Apollo's chosen messenger, a swift
High-soaring falcon; in his talons clasp'd
A dove he bore, and, as he pluck'd the prey,
Between the youthful hero and his bark
Pour'd like a show'r her plumage to the ground.
Then, calling him apart, the prophet seiz'd
His benefactor's hand, and thus he said: 640

Think not, Telemachus! that by the Gods
Unguided, and by chance, this bird had ta'en
A flight thus hopeful. Soon as I perceiv'd,
I knew him ominous.—In all the isle
No family of a more royal note
Than yours is found, and yours shall still prevail.

Then answer thus Telemachus return'd :
 Fail not this word of thine, my friend ! and soon
 I will enrich thee so, that all who meet,
 Or but behold thee, shall pronounce thee blest. 650

Then, to Piræus thus, his friend approv'd :
 Piræus, son of Clytius ! (for of all
 My followers to the shore of Pylus, none
 More prompt than thou hath my desires perform'd)
 Now also to thy own abode conduct
 This stranger, whom with hospitable care
 Cherish and honour till myself arrive.

To whom Piræus, gallant youth, replied :
 Telemachus ! however long thy stay,
 Punctual I will attend him, and no want 660
 Of kindest welcome shall he find with me.
 So saying, he climb'd the ship, then bade the crew,
 Embarking also, cast the moorings loose,
 And each obedient to his bench repair'd.
 Mean time Telemachus his sandals bound,
 And lifted from the deck his glitt'ring spear.
 Then, as Telemachus had giv'n command,
 Son of divine Ulysses, casting loose
 The moorings, forth they push'd into the Deep,
 And sought the city, while, with nimble pace 670
 Proceeding thence, the youthful hero sought
 The cottage, where Eumæus, friend sincere
 To both his masters, watch'd his num'rous charge.

BOOK XVI.

Argument.

Telemachus dispatches Eumæus to the city, to inform Penelope of his safe return from Pylus; during his absence, Ulysses makes himself known to his son. The suitors, having watched for Telemachus in vain, arrive again at Ithaca.

AT early dawn, Ulysses and his host,
Kindling the cottage fire, their food prepar'd,
And sent the peasants with their herds abroad.
The watch dogs, while Telemachus approach'd,
Bark'd not, but fawn'd around him. At that sight
And at the sound of feet, now drawing nigh,
Ulysses in wing'd accents thus remark'd:

Eumæus! some familiar friend of thine,
Or other whom thou know'st, is on his way
Toward us, for thy dogs bark not, but fawn 10
Around him; and his steps now strike mine ear.

Scarce had he ceas'd, when his own son himself
Stood in the vestibule. Upsprang at once
Eumæus wonder-struck, and letting fall
The cups in which he then sat mingling wine,
Flew to his youthful lord, and, weeping, kiss'd
His hands, his forehead, and his radiant eyes.
As when a father folds in his embrace
Arriv'd from foreign lands in the tenth year
His darling son, the offspring of his age, 20
His only one, for whom he long hath mourn'd,
So kiss'd the noble peasant o'er and o'er
Godlike Telemachus! as one escap'd
From instant death, and, plaintive, thus he spake:

Light of my eyes, thou com'st; it is thyself,
Sweetest Telemachus! whose safe return
From distant Pylus hopeless seem'd to me,
Enter, my son! that I may feast my mind
With contemplation of so dear a guest,

Arriv'd so newly from a foreign shore. 30

Thy farm delights not thee; we seldom share
Thy presence; thee it pleases most to dwell
In the throng'd city, witnessing the waste
And havock made by thy voracious foes.

To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied:
My gentle father! I will oft'ner see
Thy face hereafter; and I now arrive
For that same purpose, and from thee to learn
If still my mother occupy content
Her wonted home, or, by some other chief 40
At length espous'd, have left Ulysses' bed
Untenanted, and of no future use,
To be by noisome spiders webb'd around.

To whom the master swineherd in return:
Not so, she, patient still as ever, dwells
Beneath thy roof, but all her cheerless days
Despairing wastes, and all her nights in tears.

So saying, Eumæus at his hand receiv'd
His brazen lance, and o'er the step of stone
Enter'd Telemachus; at his approach 50
His seat Ulysses hastily resign'd,
Which thus, replacing him, his son refus'd:

Guest, keep thy seat; our cottage will afford
Some other, which Eumæus will provide.

He spake, and, as he bade, Ulysses sat.
Then, with green twigs beneath, and skins above,
Of thickest fleece, a seat Eumæus rais'd,
And down sat young Telemachus. His board
With viands, remnants of the former day,
He furnish'd next, and heaping high with bread 60
His baskets, charg'd an ivy-cup with wine,
And opposite to his illustrious lord
Ulysses sat. Toward the ready feast
Their hands they stretch'd, and (hunger now and
thirst

Both satisfied) Telemachus, his speech
Addressing to their gen'rous host, began:

My father! whence this stranger-guest of thine,
And wherefore here arriv'd? what country boast
The mariners on board whose bark he came?
For none on foot comes hither, well I know. 70

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply :
 My son ! with truth thy questions I resolve.
 He boasts him sprung from ancestry renown'd
 In spacious Crete, and hath the cities seen
 Of various lands, by fate ordain'd to roam.
 Ev'n now, from a Thesprotian ship escap'd,
 He reach'd my cottage—but I yield him thine.
 Accept the gift ; deal with him as thou wilt ;
 He is thy suppliant, and depends on thee.

Then thus, Telemachus, discreet, replied : 80
 Thy words, Eumæus ! fill me with distress.
 For, say, what guest or stranger can abide
 Secure beneath my roof ? myself am young,
 Nor yet of strength sufficient to repel
 An offer'd insult, and my mother's mind
 In doubtful balance hangs, if, still with me
 An inmate, she shall manage my concerns,
 For her first husband's sake, and for the sake
 Of her own good report, or shall espouse
 The noblest of her wooers, and the best 90
 Entitled by the splendour of his gifts.
 But I will give him, since I find him lodg'd
 Beneath thy roof, a mantle and a vest,
 A two-edg'd sword, and sandals for his feet,
 With convoy to the country of his choice.
 But let it please thee to detain him still
 An inmate here, and I will hither send
 Such raiment as he needs, nor shall he want
 Due sustenance, but shall from me receive
 Of all sorts, lest he burden thee and thine. 100
 For where the suitors come, there shall not he
 With my consent, nor stand expos'd to pride
 And petulance like theirs, lest by some sneer
 They wound him, and through him wound also me ;
 For little is it, that the boldest can
 Against so many ; numbers will prevail.

Him answer'd then Ulysses toil-inur'd :
 Dear youth ! since even I may freely speak,
 Ye rend my tortur'd soul, while ye relate
 The crimes, with which those suitors dare infest 110
 A prince's mansion, amiable as thou.—
 Is thy submission choice ? or have the words

Of some consulted oracle inclin'd
 All hearts against thee? canst thou charge the blame
 On faithless kindred? for we boldly trust
 A kinsman, even in the fiercest field!
 O that myself had youth as I have will,
 Or that renown'd Ulysses were my sire,

* * * * *

Might some brave alien strike me to the ground
 That moment headless, if I fail'd at once 120
 To seek those plund'ers in the royal house,
 And to avenge my suff'rings on them all.
 And should I wage an unsuccessful fight
 Alone with many, rather would I die
 At my own home, than witness evermore
 Their unexampled deeds, guests shov'd aside,
 Maidens dragg'd forcibly from room to room,
 Casks emptied of their rich contents, and them
 Indulging glutt'nous appetite day by day
 Enormous, without measure, without end. 130

To whom, Telemachus, discreet, replied:
 My guest! thy questions I with truth resolve.
 Me no consulted oracle hath doom'd
 To popular dislike, nor have I cause
 Of false and faithless kindred to complain,
 For Jove hath from of old with single heirs
 Our house supplied; Arcesias none begat
 Except Laertes, and Laertes none
 Except Ulysses, and Ulysses me
 Left here his only one, ere yet of age 140
 To recompense his love from whom I sprang.
 Thence comes it that our palace swarms with foes;
 For all the rulers of the neighbour isles,
 Samos, Dulichium, and the forest-crown'd
 Zacynthus, others also rulers here
 In craggy Ithaca, my mother woo,
 And day and night all riot at my cost.
 For while she neither can at once reject
 Their hated offers, nor imagine means
 Of clear deliv'rance from them, they devour 150
 Mean time my substance, and will also soon
 Myself destroy, but Heav'n disposes all.

Eumæus! haste, my father! bear with speed

News to Penelope, that I am safe,
And have arriv'd from Pylus; I will wait
Till thou return; and well beware that none
Hear thee beside, for I have many foes.

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply:
It is enough. I understand. Thou speak'st
To one intelligent. But say beside, 160
Shall I not seize th' occasion, as I go,
With the same joyful tidings to console
Distress'd Laertes? who, while yet he mourn'd
Ulysses only, could o'ersee the works,
And dieted among his menials oft
As hunger prompted him; but now, they say,
Since thy departure to the Pylian shore,
He neither eats as he was wont, nor drinks,
Nor oversees his hinds, but sighing sits
And weeping, wasted even to the bore. 170

To whom Ulysses' offspring in return:
Hard though it be, yet to his tears and sighs
Him leave we now. We cannot what we would.
For were the course and order of events
At our control, it were the foremost wish
Of all our hearts, to see my sire's return.
Thou, therefore, wander not from field to field
In quest of him, but, once thy message told,
Speed home again, and let the queen dispatch
Her secretly, in whom she most confides, 180
Charg'd with thy tidings for the senior's ear.

He said, and urg'd him forth, who, binding on
His sandals, to the city bent his way.
Nor went Eumæus from his cottage forth
Unmark'd by Pallas, but the Goddess came,
In semblance an accomplish'd damsel, fair
And of majestic mien; before the gate
Her stand she took. Ulysses from within
Beheld her, but Telemachus, his son,
Discern'd her not; for Pow'rs divine reveal 190
Their presence in whose sight soe'er they please.
Ulysses, therefore, and Eumæus' dogs
Alone descried her, and the affrighted hounds
Bark'd not, but whin'd, and hid them where they
might.

She beckon'd him ; he saw the gracious sign
 Intelligent, and issuing through the court
 Before her stood, when thus the Goddess spake :

Laertes' progeny, for wiles renown'd !
 No longer from thy son his sire withhold,
 But speak thee plainly such ; then planning here 200
 Destruction first for all your foes at home,
 Haste to the city, where ye shall not want
 My presence long, for I desire the fight.

Minerva spake, and with her rod of gold
 Touch'd him ; his mantle first and vest she made
 Pure as new-blanch'd ; dilating next his form,
 She gave dimensions ampler to his limbs ;
 Swarthy again his manly hue became,
 Round his full face, and black his bushy chin.
 The change perform'd, Minerva disappear'd, 210
 And the illustrious hero turn'd again
 Into the cottage ; wonder at that sight
 Seiz'd on Telemachus ; askance he look'd,
 Awe-struck, not unsuspicious of a God,
 And in wing'd accents eager thus began :

Thou art no longer whom I lately saw,
 Thy vesture was not such, nor wore thy cheeks
 This healthful hue. The wondrous change bespeaks
 A Deity, and thou descend'st from Heav'n.
 O smile on us, that we may yield the rites 220
 Acceptable, and bring thee golden gifts
 Elaborate ; ah spare us, Pow'r divine !

To whom Ulysses, hero toil-inur'd :
 I am no God. Why deem'st thou me divine ?
 I am thy father, for whose sake thou lead'st
 A life of wo, by violence oppress'd.

So saying, he kiss'd his son, while from his cheeks
 Tears trickled, tears till then perforce restrain'd.
 Telemachus (for he believ'd him not
 His father yet) thus, wond'ring, spake again : 230

My father, said'st thou ? no. Thou art not he,
 But some Divinity beguiles my soul
 With mock'ries, to afflict me still the more ;
 For never mortal man could so have wrought
 By his own pow'r ; some interposing God
 Alone could render thee both young and old ;

For old thou wast of late, and foully clad,
But wear'st the semblance now of those in Heav'n !

To whom Ulysses, ever wise, replied :

Telemachus ! it is not well, my son ! 240

That thou shouldst greet thy father with a face
Of wild astonishment, and stand aghast.

Ulysses, save myself, none comes, be sure.

Such as thou seest me, num'rous toils achiev'd,

And woes sustain'd, I visit once again

My native country in the twentieth year.

This wonder Athenæan Pallas wrought,

She cloth'd me even with what form she would,

For so she can. Now poor I seem and old,

Now young again, and clad in fresh attire. 250

So easy is it to the Pow'rs above,

T' exalt or to debase a mortal man.

So saying, he sat. Then threw Telemachus

His arms around his father's neck, and wept.

Pangs of soft sorrow not to be suppress'd

Seiz'd both ; in murmur'd sounds of tend'rest tone

They breath'd it forth, more piteous than the bird

(Eagle, or hook-nail'd vulture), from whose nest

Some swain hath stol'n her yet unfeather'd young.

So they their cheeks with big round drops of wo 260

Bedewing stood, nor had the setting sun

Cessation of their weeping seen, had not

Telemachus his father thus address'd :

What ship convey'd thee to thy native shore,

My father ! and what country boast the crew ?

For, that on foot thou not arriv'dst, is sure.

To whom his long-afflicted sire replied :

My child ! I will inform thee. Learn the truth.

Conducted by Phæacia's gallant sons

I came, a race accustom'd to convey 270

Strangers, who visit them, across the Deep.

Me, o'er the billows in a rapid bark

Borne sleeping, on my native shores they laid,

Enrich'd with many a precious gift, with brass,

With tissu'd raiment, and with store of gold,

Which, warn'd from Heav'n, in caves conceal'd I left,

And by suggestion of Minerva sought

This cottage, where I will, with thee, concert

Fit means to punish our voracious foes.
 Now, therefore, sort and sum them; I would know,
 Both whence they come, and their united force, 281
 That next I may consult my dauntless heart,
 If we alone may match them, and contend
 Ourselves with all, or must have aid beside.

Then, answer thus his son, discreet, return'd:
 My father! I have ever heard thee prais'd
 For wisdom, and for matchless might in arms,
 But with astonishment this word of thine
 O'erwhelms me. Can so many and so brave
 Be match'd by two alone? for neither ten 290
 Are they, nor twenty, but more num'rous far.
 Learn now their numbers. Fifty youths and two
 Came from Dulichium; they are chosen men,
 And six attendants follow in their train;
 From Samos twenty youths and four arrive;
 Zacynthus also of Achaia's sons
 Sends twenty more; and Ithaca supplies,
 Herself, twelve nobles. Medon also waits
 On these, the herald, and the bard divine,
 With other two, for culinary skill 300
 Selected, and to dress the sumptuous board.
 Should we within the palace, we alone,
 Assail them all, I fear lest thy revenge
 And thy return alike disastrous prove
 And bitter to thyself. But recollect—
 Think, if thou canst, on whose confed'rate arm
 Strenuous in our behalf we may rely.

To him replied his patient father bold:
 I will inform thee. Mark. Weigh well my words.
 Will Pallas with the glorious Sire of all 310
 Suffice us? or demands the desp'rate fight
 More strenuous aids, and mightier still than they?

Then answer thus Telemachus return'd:
 Good friends indeed are they, whom thou hast
 nam'd,
 Though thron'd above the clouds: for their control
 Is universal both in Earth and Heav'n.

To whom Ulysses, toil-worn chief renown'd:
 Not long will they the glorious strife decline,
 When once within my palace shall be tried

Whose might in arms surpasses, theirs or ours. 320
But thou, departing at the dawn of day,
Rejoin those haughty suitors, and, erelong,
Eumæus me shall to the city lead
In form a miserable beggar old.
And should they with dishonourable scorn
Insult me, patient thou my wrongs endure;
Or should they even drag me by the feet
Abroad, or smite me with the spear, thy wrath
Refraining gently counsel them to cease
From such extravagance; but well I know, 330
That cease they will not, for their hour is come.
And mark me well; repose what now I say
Deep in thy soul. What time Minerva's self
Shall prompt me to it, shaking then my brows
I will admonish thee; thou, so appris'd,
Remove what arms soe'er thou find'st below,
And in the chamber's close recess above
Secure them, and with feign'd composure say,
When missing them, the suitors ask the cause,
I have but further plac'd them from the smoke; 340
For they appear no longer those which erst
Ulysses, going hence to Ilium, left,
So smirch'd and sullied by the breath of fire.
This weightier reason (thou shalt also say)
Some God suggested to me—lest, inflam'd
With wine, ye wound each other in your brawls,
Shaming both feast and courtship; for the view
Itself of arms incites to their abuse.
Yet leave two falchions for ourselves alone,
Two bucklers, and two spears, which we will seize
With sudden force, and Pallas and her Sire 351
Their hearts shall fill with womanish dismay.
Hear also this, and hold the caution fast.
If thou indeed be mine, by true descent
Ulysses' offspring, of my safe return
Let none hear news from thee; no, not my sire
Laertes, nor Eumæus, nor of all
Our menials any, nor herself the queen,
That thou and I, alone, may search the drift
Of our domestic women, and may prove 360
Our serving men, who rev'rences and fears,

And who contemns us both, but chiefly thee
So gracious, and so worthy to be lov'd.

Him then thus answer'd his illustrious son:
My father! Thou shalt understand, I trust,
Hereafter, that thy genuine son am I,
Nor want a manly mind. But I account
Thy purpos'd course unlikely to avail
Thyself or me; for, I entreat thee, think
How tedious were it, at thy sev'ral farms 370
To visit all the servants, proving each,
And the proud suitors merciless devour
Mean time thy substrnce, nor abstain from aught.
Learn, if thou wilt (and I that course myself
Advise), who slights thee of the female train,
And who is guiltless; but I would not try
From house to house the men, far better prov'd
Hereafter, if, in truth, propitious signs
From Heav'n have promis'd thee the Thund'rer's
aid.

Thus they conferr'd. The gallant bark, mean time,
Reach'd Ithaca, which from the Pylian shore 381
Had brought Telemachus with all his band.
Within the many-fathom'd port arriv'd,
His lusty followers hal'd her far aground,
Then bore their armour homeward, but the gifts,
A splendid store, to Clytius' house convey'd.
Next to the royal mansion they dispatch'd
A herald, charg'd with tidings to the queen,
That, safe return'd Telemachus had sought
Eumæus' cottage, and the bark had sent 390
Home to the city; that the matchless dame,
Reliev'd from needless fear, might cease to mourn.
They then, the herald and Eumæus, both
Charg'd with one message, meeting, in the court
Of their illustrious lord together stood,
And, while the women compass'd him around,
The herald said—Telemachus, O queen,
Thy son, is safe, and even now arriv'd.
Eumæus, next approaching her, rehears'd
His message also from her son receiv'd, 400
And, all his errand punctually perform'd,
Leaving the palace, sought his home again.

Then were the suitors troubled, and with hearts
Dejected, issuing through the exteriour court,
All sat before the porch; when thus the son
Of Polybus, Eurymachus, began:

My friends! The daring boy, although we deem'd
This voyage such as he could ne'er achieve,
Hath yet perform'd it. Send we, therefore, forth
A bark of prime repute, her benches fill'd 410
With stout and skilful rowers, who shall haste
To summon those successless watchers home.

Scarce had he said, when, turning where he sat,
Amphinomus beheld a bark arriv'd
Just then in port; he saw them furling sail,
And seated with their oars in hand; he laugh'd
Through pleasure at that sight, and thus he spake:

Our message may be spar'd. Lo! they arrive.
Some God perhaps inform'd them, or they saw,
Themselves, it may be, the returning bark 420
Too swiftly passing to be reach'd by theirs.

He spake; they, rising, landed on the beach.
Alert they drew the sable bark aground,
And by his servant each his arms dispatch'd
To his own home. Then all to council close
Assembling, neither elder of the land
Nor youth allow'd to join them, and the rest,
Euphites' son, Antinoüs, thus bespake:

Ah! how the Gods have rescu'd him! all day
Perch'd on the airy mountain-top, our spies 430
Successive watch'd; and, when the sun declin'd,
We never slept on shore, but still from eve
To dawn of morning plough'd the vast abyss,
Hoping Telemachus; that we might seize
And slay him; but his happier fortune him
Had mean time guided to his native shore.
Now, therefore, seated here, contrive we means
For his destruction, such as must prevail;
For never, while *he* lives, shall we obtain
Our purpos'd end, so subtle is he grown, 440
And the whole city now are on his side.
Come, then—prevent him, ere he call the Greeks
To council; for he will not long delay,
But will excite their anger, and will tell

Amid them all, how we in vain devis'd
His death; a deed which they will scarce applaud,
But, for our punishment, will drive us forth
Perhaps, to wander in some foreign land.
Prevent him, therefore, quickly; in the field
Slay him, or on the road; so shall his wealth 450
And his possessions on ourselves devolve,
Which we will share in common; but his house
Shall be the queen's, and his whom she shall wed.
If this displease you, and ye rather choose,
That he should live and occupy entire
His patrimony, then no longer here
Assembled let us revel at his cost,
But let the nuptial gift of each, produc'd,
Plead for him, and the queen that prince espouse,
Who proffers most, and whom the fates ordain. 460

He ceas'd; the assembly silent sat and mute.
Then rose Amphinomus amid them all,
Offspring renown'd of Nisus, son, himself,
Of king Aretias. Chief was he of all
The suitor train, who from the pleasant isle
Dulichium had arriv'd, and by his speech
Most pleas'd Penelope, for he was mild
And prudent, and his counsel thus propos'd:

Far from my bosom be the wish, my friends!
To slay Telemachus; the royal race 470
Is sacred, and may not be slightly slain.
First, therefore, ask we counsel from above;
For should the mighty Thund'rer in reply
Commend your purpose, I will then advise
Myself his death, and help you; but if He
Give unpropitious answer, then forbear.

So spake Amphinomus, whom all approv'd.
Arising then, into Ulysses' house
They went, where each his splendid seat resum'd.

Penelope, mean time, resolv'd to appear 480
Before the ruthless suitors, whose design
To slay her son from Medon she had learn'd,
The herald, for his ear had caught the sound.
Toward the hall with her attendant train
She mov'd, and when, most graceful of her sex,
Where sat the suitors she arriv'd, between

The columns of the stately dome she stood,
And, cov'ring with her white veil's lucid folds
Her lovely features, to Antinoüs spake :

Antinoüs, pitiless, injurious prince ! 490

The people deem thee wise, and thou art held
Worthier than all of equal age, to rule
Their councils; but such worth was never thine.
How hast thou dar'd profanely to infringe
Jove's host-protecting ord'nance, and to scheme,
In his own house, the slaughter of my son ?
Know'st not, that hither erst thy father fled,
Fearing the people furiously incens'd
By wrongs, which he, with Taphian robbers join'd,
Had done to the Thesprotians, our allies? 500
They would have rent him piecemeal, and have made
His plentiful possessions all their own,
But that Ulysses check'd them, and repress'd
Their fierce revenge, whose kindness thou repay'st
Wasting his wealth; soliciting his wife;
Slaying his son; and, me t' afflict the more,
Enacting all these mischiefs for my sake.
But cease, I charge thee, and bid cease the rest.

To whom the son of Polybus replied,
Eurymachus;—Icarius' daughter wise ! 510

Take courage, fair Penelope, and chase
These fears unreasonable from thy mind !
The man lives not, nor shall, who, while I live,
And faculty of sight retain, shall harm
Thy son Telemachus. For thus I say,
And thus will I perform; his blood shall stream
A sable current from my lance's point
That moment; for the town-destroying chief
Ulysses, oft, me placing on his knees,
Hath fill'd my infant grasp with sav'ry food, 520
And giv'n me ruddy wine. I, therefore, hold
Telemachus of all men most my friend,
Nor hath he death to fear from hand of ours.
But when the Gods shall doom him, die he must.

So he encourag'd her, who yet, himself,
Plotted his death. She, reascending, sought
Her stately chamber, and, arriving there,
Deplor'd with tears her long-regretted lord,

Till Athenæan Pallas softly bath'd
Her closing eyelids with the dew of sleep. 530

And now, at eventide, Eumæus reach'd
Ulysses and his son. A yearling swine
Just slain they skilfully for food prepar'd,
When Pallas came, and, smiting with her wand
Ulysses, wither'd his whole form again,
And made his vesture sordid as before,
Lest, knowing him, the swain at once should seek
Penelope, and let the secret forth.

Then foremost him Telemachus address'd :
Noble Eumæus ! thou art come ; what news 540
Bring'st from the city ? Have the warrior band
Of suitors, hopeless of their ambush, reach'd
The port again, or wait they still for me ?

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply :
No time for such inquiry, nor to range
The city-streets had I, but anxious wish'd
To make my message known, and to return.
But, as it chanc'd a nimble herald, sent
From thy companions, met me on the way,
Who reach'd thy mother first. Yet this I know, 550
For this I saw. Passing above the town,
Where they have pil'd a way-side hill of stones
To Merc'ry, I beheld a gallant bark
Ent'ring the port, a num'rous band she bore
Of youths, all warriors, who with shields and spears
Of glitt'ring point had stor'd her to the brim.
Theirs I conjectur'd her, and could no more.

He spake ; and, by Eumæus unperceiv'd,
Telemachus his father ey'd and smil'd.
Their task accomplish'd, and the table spread, 560
They ate, nor any his due portion miss'd ;
And, hunger now and thirst both sated, all
To rest repair'd, and took the gift of sleep.

BOOK XVII.

Argument.

Telemachus returns to the city, and relates to his mother the principal passages of his voyage; Ulysses, conducted by Eumæus, arrives there also, and enters among the suitors, having been known only by his old dog Argus, who dies at his feet. The curiosity of Penelope being excited by the account which Eumæus gives her of Ulysses, she orders him immediately into her presence; but Ulysses postpones the interview till evening, when, the suitors having left the palace, there shall be no danger of interruption. Eumæus returns to his cottage.

NOW look'd Aurora from the East abroad,
When the illustrious offspring of divine
Ulysses bound his sandals to his feet,
Seiz'd his strong spear well-fitted to the grasp,
And, ere he sought the city and his home,
His friend and host Eumæus thus bespake:

Father! I seek the city, to convince
My mother of my safe return, whose tears,
I judge, and lamentation shall not cease,
Till she behold me. But I ask from thee 10
This service; introduce into the town,
Thyself, this hapless guest, that he may beg
Provision there, a morsel and a drop
From such as may, perchance, vouchsafe the boon.
I cannot, vex'd and harass'd as I am,
Feed all, and should he deem such treatment hard,
The worse for him. Plain truth is my delight.

To whom Ulysses, ever wise, replied:
My youthful friend! I would, myself, depart.
Better the mendicant in cities seeks 20
His dole, vouchsafe it whosoever may,
Than in the villages. No longer young,

I could not labour hard, nor all perform
That it might please a master to command.
Go then, and when I shall have warm'd my limbs
Before the hearth, and when the risen sun
Shall somewhat chase the cold, thy servant's task
Shall be to guide me thither, as thou bidd'st.
For this is a vile garb; the frosty breath
Of morning would benumb me thus attir'd, 30
And, as ye say, the city is remote.

He ended, and Telemachus in haste
Set forth, his thoughts all teeming as he went
With dire revenge. Arriving at his home
He pass'd the threshold, enter'd, and reclin'd
His lance against a column of the dome.
Him Euryclea first, his nurse, perceiv'd,
While on the variegated seats she spread
Their fleecy cov'ring; swift with tearful eyes
She flew to him, and the whole female train 40
Of brave Ulysses swarm'd around his son,
Clasping him, and his forehead and his neck
Kissing affectionate; then came, herself,
As golden Venus or Diana fair,
Forth from her chamber to her son's embrace,
The chase Penelope; with tears she threw
Her arms around him, his bright-beaming eyes
And forehead kiss'd, and with a murmur'd plaint
Maternal, in wing'd accents thus began:

Light of these eyes, thou com'st, it is thyself, 50
Dearest Telemachus! whose safe return
I never hop'd, when once thou hadst embark'd
For Pylus, secretly and well-assur'd
Of my dissent, news seeking of thy sire.
But speak of Nestor, and describe at large
The welcome shown thee by the Pylian sage.

To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied:
My mother! spare to grieve me, nor afflict
Thy son still sore distress'd, although escap'd,
So newly, from a death which seem'd so sure. 60
Go, bath'd and habited in fresh attire,
To thy superiour chamber, where arriv'd
With thine attendant women, vow to Jove
And to the Gods whole hecatombs, in hope

Of just revenge by their effectual aid.
 I seek the forum, there to introduce
 A guest, my follower from the Pylian shore,
 Whom, sent before me with my gallant friends,
 I bade Piræus kindly entertain
 At his own house, till I should visit mine. 70

He spake, nor flew his words unmark'd away.
 She, bath'd and habited in fresh attire,
 Sought her superiour chamber, where arriv'd
 With all her female train, to Jove she vow'd
 And to the Gods whole hecatombs, in hope
 Of just revenge by their effectual aid.

Then, spear in hand, went forth her son, two dogs
 Fleet-footed following him. O'er all his form
 Pallas diffus'd a dignity divine,
 And ev'ry eye gaz'd on him as he pass'd. 80

The suitors throng'd him round, joy on their lips
 And welcome, but deep mischief in their hearts.

He, shunning all the multitude, a seat
 Soon found, where Antiphus and Mentor sat
 And Halitherses, from their earliest days
 His father's friends, and for that cause his own,
 Who question'd him of all that he had seen.
 And now Piræus, leading through the town
 His guest, approach'd the council, whom the prince
 Soon greeted, and as soon Piræus said— 90

Sir! send thy menial women, to bring home
 The precious charge committed to my care,
 Thy gifts at Menelaus' hands receiv'd.

To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied:
 Piræus! wait; we know not where will end
 These troubles. Should I from the suitors' hands
 Receive a death-wound privately at home,
 And leave my substance to be shar'd by them,
 I rather wish those treasures thine, than theirs.
 But should I with success for them devise 100
 A bloody death, then, wing'd with joy, thyself
 Bring home those presents to thy joyful friend.

He said, and introduc'd his anxious guest
 Into the royal mansion. There arriv'd,
 Each on his throne or couch his mantle cast;
 Bath'd in the polish'd vase; his limbs bedew'd

With limpid oils, and, by the women serv'd
 With splendid vest and fleecy mantle warm,
 Stepp'd from the bath, and sought his couch again.
 A maiden next, with golden ewer charg'd, 110
 And silver bowl, pour'd water on their hands,
 And spread the polish'd table, which with food
 Of all kinds, furnish'd from the present store,
 The cat'ress of the royal house supplied.
 Mean time, beside a column of the dome
 His mother, on a couch reclining, twirl'd
 Her slender threads. They to the furnish'd board
 Stretch'd forth their hands, and, hunger now and thirst
 Both satisfied, Penelope began :

Telemachus! I will ascend again, 120
 And will betake me to my mournful bed,
 Bath'd ever with my tears, since, following hence
 The sons of Atreus to the Trojan shore,
 Ulysses left it; for our haughty guests
 Now fill the court again, and still thou keep'st
 The hope of his return, if thou have heard
 Such tidings, cruelly conceal'd from me.

Her answer'd then Telemachus discreet :
 My mother! Learn the truth. We reach'd the shores
 Of Pylus. There, the venerable chief, 130
 Nestor, receiv'd me to his royal home,
 And with such welcome as a father shows
 To his own son, long lost and newly found,
 Such kindness Nestor and his noble sons
 Vouchsaf'd to me. But never had he learn'd
 From mortal lips, he said, my father's fate,
 If still he live, or have already died.
 He, therefore, sent me to the Spartan court
 With steeds and chariot of his own, t' inquire
 Of warlike Menelaus. There I found 140
 Helen of Argos, by the will of Heav'n
 Auth'ress of trouble both to Greece and Troy.
 At once the valiant Menelaus ask'd,
 What cause had urg'd me to the pleasant vale
 Of Lacedæmon; plainly I rehears'd
 The whole occasion, and he thus replied :

Ye Gods! they are ambitious of the bed
 Of a brave man, however base themselves.

But, as it chances when the hart hath laid
Her fawns, new-yea'n'd and sucklings yet, to rest 150
In some resistless lion's den, she roams,
Mean time, the hills, and in the grassy vales
Feeds heedless, but the lion, to his lair
Returning, rends them both; with such a force
Resistless shall Ulysses them destroy.

Jove! Pallas! and Apollo! O that such,
As erst in well-built Lesbos, where he threw
Philomelides in a wrestling-match
With mighty force, when all the Greeks rejoic'd,
Ulysses now might mingle with his foes! 160
Short life and bitter nuptials should be theirs.

But now such answer as with earnest suit
Thou hast implor'd, direct and true, receive.
For I will nought conceal, but will impart
All that the ancient Prophet of the Deep
Hath taught me, with exactest truth to thee.
The God declar'd, that he had seen thy sire
Guest of the nymph Calypso; by constraint
Her guest, and from his native land withheld
By sad necessity, for ships well-oar'd 170
Or faithful followers hath he none, whose aid
Might speed him safely o'er the spacious flood.

So Menelaüs spake, whom, thus inform'd,
At once I left, and, favour'd by the Gods
With prosp'rous gales, soon reach'd my native home.
He spake; and tumult in his mother's heart,
So speaking, rais'd. Consolatory, next,
The Godlike Theoclymenus began:

O blameless consort of Laertes' son!
Little the Spartan knew; but list to me, 180
For I will plainly prophesy and sure.
Be Jove of all in Heav'n my witness first,
Then this thy hospitable board, and last
The household Gods of the illustrious chief,
Ulysses, at whose hearth I have arriv'd,
That, ev'n now within his native isle,
From some obscure retreat Ulysses views
These foul enormities, himself unseen,
And plans complete destruction for them all.
So sure an augury, while in my place 190

On board the gallant bark I sat, appear'd,
Which I aloud expounded to thy son.

Then answer, thus, Penelope return'd:
Fail not this word of thine, my friend! and soon
I will enrich thee so, that all who meet,
Or but behold thee, shall pronounce thee blest.

Thus they conferr'd. Mean time the suitors hurl'd
The quoit and lance on the smooth area spread
Before Ulysses' gate, the custom'd scene
Of their contentions, sports, and clamours rude. 200
But when the hour of supper now approach'd,
And from the pastures on all sides the sheep
Came with their wonted drivers, then exclaim'd
Medon, the herald beyond all the rest
Their fav'rite, and who waited at the board—

Enough of play, young princes! leave the court,
That we may dress our ev'ning fare within,
Since in well-tim'd refreshment harm is none.

He spake, whose admonition pleas'd. At once
All, rising, sought the palace; there arriv'd, 210
On couches or on thrones their cloaks they spread,
And, with a fatted ox, sheep, goats, and brawns
Of hugest size stretch'd lifeless on the floor,
Hasten'd the banquet; nor with less dispatch
Ulysses and Eumæus now prepar'd

To seek the town, when thus the swain began:

Since then, my friend! obedient to the will
Of my young lord, thou hast resolv'd to seek
The distant town, although I wish thee much
My fellow-lab'rer here, yet, lest he chide, 220
Whose sharp reproof would grieve me and distress,
Haste, let us hence. Day verges to a close,
And soon the breath of eve will chill thee more.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied:
It is enough. I understand. Thou speak'st
To one intelligent. We will depart,
And lead, thyself, the way; but give me first,
If thou have one well-season'd and at hand,
A staff to lean on, for ye speak the road
A rugged one, and dang'rous to the foot. 230

So saying, his tatter'd wallet o'er his back
He cast, suspended by a leathern twist.

Eumæus gratified him with a staff,
 And forth they went, leaving the cottage kept
 By dogs and swains. He city-ward his king
 Led on, in form a squalid beggar old,
 Halting, and in unseemly garb attir'd.
 But when, slow-travelling the craggy way,
 They now approach'd the town, and had attain'd
 The marble fountain deep, which with its streams 240
 Pellucid all the citizens supplied
 (That fountain Ithacus had fram'd of old,
 With Neritus and Polyctor, over which
 A grove of water-nourish'd alders hung,
 Encircling it around, while cold the rill
 Ran from the rock, on whose tall summit stood
 The Naiads' altar, whom no trav'ler fail'd,
 Come whence he might, to worship ere he pass'd),
 Melantheus, son of Dolius, at that fount
 Met them; the chos'n goats of ev'ry flock, 250
 The suitors' destin'd supper, from the field
 He drove, two swains assisting him. The churl,
 Them seeing, in rude, accents, such as fir'd
 Ulysses with resentment, thus began:

Ay—this is well—The villain leads the vile—
 Thus evermore the Gods join like to like.
 Thou clumsy swineherd, whither wouldst conduct
 This morsel-hunting mendicant obscene,
 Gleaner of scraps and fragments? many a post
 Shall chafe his brawny shoulders, while he seeks 260
 Nor sword nor tripod, but the scoundrel meed
 Of mammoths, such as others cast away.
 Wouldst thou afford him to me for a guard
 Or sweeper of my stalls, or to supply
 My kids with leaves, he should on bulkier thewes
 Supported stand, though nourish'd but with whey.
 But no such useful arts hath he acquir'd,
 Nor likes he work, but rather much t' extort
 From others food for his unsated maw.
 But mark my prophecy, for it is true; 270
 At fam'd Ulysses' house should he arrive,
 Hurl'd by the guests shall many a footstool whizz
 Around his ears, and from his ribs rebound.

So spake the babbler, and, approaching, smote

With brutal force of his uplifted heel
 Ulysses' haunch, yet shook not from his path
 The firm-set chief; irresolute awhile
 He stood, and doubtful, whether with his staff
 To strike him dead, or, heaving him on high,
 To dash him headlong downward on the stones, 280
 But, prudent, curb'd his vengeance. With disdain,
 Mean time, Eumæus ey'd him, and, aloud,
 With lifted hands the Naiads thus implor'd:

Nymphs of these fountains, progeny of Jove!
 If e'er Ulysses on your altar burn'd
 The thighs of fatted lambs or kids, O grant,
 That, under conduct of some gracious Pow'r,
 The long-regretted chief may soon return!
 So shall those lips be taught an humbler strain,
 Nor, while thou roam'st the city, shall the flocks, 290
 Left with bad shepherds, perish day by day.

To whom Melantheus answer thus return'd:
 Gods! with what force and fluency the whelp
 Hath spoken! He shall hence on board my bark
 With me, hereafter, to a distant shore,
 Where I will sell him at no little gain.
 I would, that he who bears the silver bow
 As sure might pierce Telemachus this day
 In his own house, or that the suitors might,
 As that same wand'rer shall return no more! 300

He said and went. They slowly pac'd behind,
 But, swifter, he soon reach'd Ulysses' house,
 Where, ent'ring with a fearless stride, he join'd
 The suitors, and his fav'rite of them all
 Eurymachus. The sewer with dispatch
 His portion set before him; and his bread,
 As quick, the mistress of the stores supplied.
 Ulysses, and his faithful guide, the while,
 Eumæus, drawing near, the sound perceiv'd
 Symphonius of the tuneful voice and lyre, 310
 For Phemius had begun. They paus'd. The chief
 Seiz'd fast Eumæus' hand, and thus he said:

Ulysses' house, Eumæus! is, in truth,
 A noble pile; discernible with ease
 From all besides. Not one alone it seems,
 But many. Spacious are the courts; the walls

Crested with curious sculpture, and well-fram'd
The massy folding doors. No man, methinks,
Should e'er achieve by force his entrance here.
But many a guest sits banquetting within, 320
Full well I know; so fast the sav'ry steam
Fumes upward, and so sweetly sounds the lyre,
Divine associate of the festal board.

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply:
Thou hast well judg'd; no wonder; thou art quick
On ev'ry theme; but now bethink thee well,
What course were wisest. Ent'ring, if thou wilt,
The mansion, to the suitors' presence tend,
Me leaving here; or I will enter first,
While thou remain'st; but fear to tarry long, 330
Lest some proud herald, seeing thee without,
Chase thee with stones, or strike thee. This concern
Asks serious thought; delib'rate and decide.

Him answer'd, then, the patient hero bold:
It is enough. I understand. Thou speak't
To one intelligent. Lead thou the way,
Me leaving here, for neither strokes nor stones
Are strange to me. Familiar with the toils
Of battle and with stormy seas, I boast
Much patience. Follow next, what follow may! 340
But hunger hath a cry, which never man
Might silence. Many an evil he endures
For hunger's sake. It is a craving gulf,
To satiate which, we plough the barren Deep
For battle arm'd, and ravage distant shores.

Thus they convers'd; when, lying near, his head
Ulysses' dog, the faithful Argus, heav'd,
And set his ears erect. The chief himself
Had rear'd him, but, departing to the shores
Of Ilium, left the trial of his worth 350
To youths oft-times indebted to his speed
For wild-goat, hart, and hare. Forlorn he lay,
A poor unheeded cast-off, on the ground,
Where mules and oxen had before the gate
Much ordure left, with which Ulysses' hinds
Should, in due time, manure his spacious fields.
There lay, by vermin worried to the bone,
The wretched Argus; soon as he perceiv'd

Long-lost Ulysses nigh, down fell his ears
Clapp'd close, and with his tail glad sign he gave 360
Of gratulation, impotent to rise,
And to approach his master. At that sight
Ulysses, unperceiv'd, a starting tear
Wip'd off, and of Eumæus thus inquir'd:

I can but wonder, seeing such a dog
Thus lodg'd, Eumæus! beautiful he seems,
But wanted, I suspect, due speed to match
His comely shape; a table-guard, belike,
And for his looks priz'd more than for his use.

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply: 370
He is the dog of one far hence deceas'd.
But had he now such body, plight, and strength,
As when his lord, departing to the shores
Of Ilium, left him, thou shouldst view, at once,
With wonder, his agility and force.

He never in the sylvan deep recess
The wild beast saw, that scap'd him, and he track'd
Their steps infallible; but comfort none
Enjoys he now; for distant far from home
His lord hath died, and, heedless of his dog, 380
The women neither house nor give him food.
For whom Jove dooms to servitude, he takes
At once the half of that man's worth away.

He spake; and, passing the wide portal, came
Where the imperious suitors feasting sat.
And Argus, soon as in the twentieth year
He had beheld once more with sparkling eyes
His lord Ulysses, clos'd them, and expir'd.

Long ere the rest Telemachus perceiv'd 389
The swineherd's entrance, and with beck'ning brows
Invited his approach. Eumæus cast
His eye around, and, seeing near at hand
The sewer's seat, which he was wont to fill,
While with their portions of the feast he serv'd
The num'rous guests, he plac'd it right before
Telemachus, whose herald soon with bread
From the full basket, and with various meats,
An ample share, supplied the welcome swain.
Him soon Ulysses follow'd, ent'ring slow
The palace, like a squalid beggar old, 400

Staff-propp'd, and in loose tatters foul attir'd.
 Within the portal on its ashen sill
 His seat he found, and, as he sat, reclin'd
 Against a cypress pillar, straight, and tall,
 And shaven smooth, the labour'd work of art.
 Then took Telemachus a loaf entire
 Forth from the shining basket, and of flesh
 A portion, such as with both hands he might,
 And gave his friend Eumæus thus in charge:

These to the stranger; bid him also seek 410
 Some dole from ev'ry suitor; bashful fear
 Ill suits the mendicant by want oppress'd.

He spake, and, as he bade, Eumæus sought
 Ulysses, whom approaching, thus he said:

Telemachus, O stranger, sends thee these,
 And counsels thee to importune for more
 The suitors, one by one; for bashful fear
 Ill suits the mendicant by want oppress'd.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied:
 Jove, King of all! all happiness impart 420
 To dear Telemachus, and ev'ry wish,
 That warms his gen'rous bosom most, fulfil.

He spake, and in his open palms receiv'd
 The plenteous boon, which spreading at his feet,
 On his unseemly wallet, while the bard
 Still sang, he fed, and when the tuneful voice
 And lyre were heard no more, he ceas'd to feed.
 Then with loud tumult of the suitors rang
 The lofty dome; and Pallas, whisp'ring, bade
 Ulysses ask a dole of remnant bread 430
 From each, for trial of the smother sort
 And of the more austere; although she teem'd
 With like unsparing vengeance for them all.
 From right to left his progress he began,
 Petitioning, with outstretch'd hands, the throng,
 As one familiar with the beggar's art.

He mov'd them and they gave, but view'd him still
 With wonder, and inquiries mutual made
 Who, and whence was he? Then the goatherd rose,
 Melantheus, and th' assembly thus address'd: 440

Hear me, ye suitors of th' illustrious queen!
 This uninvited stranger have I met

Elsewhere; the swineherd brought him; but he comes
I know not whence; nor yet from whom he sprang.

So he; then thus Antinoüs stern rebuk'd
The swineherd: Ah, notorious as thou art,
Why hast thou shown this vagabond the way
Into the city? are we not enough
Infested with these whining hungry drones?
And hast thou sought him as a needful aid 450
Of others like himself, who, swarming here,
Feed, never stated, at thy master's cost?

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply:
Antinoüs! though of high degree, thou speak'st
Not wisely. For who roams from shore to shore
In quest of any man, unless he claim,
For some conspicuous talent, such regard?
The prophet, and the healer of disease,
The skilful artist, and the bard inspir'd
With strains that charm his hearers, these we seek, 460
And these in ev'ry nation under Heav'n
Are dearly priz'd. But who would seek afar,
To his own hurt, th' unprofitable poor?
But thou of all the suitors roughly treat'st
Ulysses' servants most, and chiefly me;
Proceed; I fear thee little, while the queen,
With her illustrious son, inhabits here.

To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied:
Peace! answer not at large a man like him.
Antinoüs hath a tongue accustom'd much 470
To tauntings, and promotes them in the rest.

Then, turning to Antinoüs, quick he said—
Antinoüs! thy paternal kindness claims
My filial thanks, who bidd'st me sternly drive
The friendless stranger hence; but God forbid!
Impart to him. I grudge not, rather much
Myself exhort thee. Neither fear the queen
In such a cause, nor let the meaner fear
Of servants check thee. But thy bosom glows
With no such warmth; thou pleasure find'st it none,
T' impart; thy sole delight is to receive. 481

To whom Antinoüs answer thus return'd:
High-soaring and intemp'rate in thy speech,
How hast thou said, Telemachus? Would all

As much bestow on him, he should not seek
Admittance here again three months to come.

So saying, he seiz'd the stool, which, banquetting,
He press'd with his nice feet, and from beneath
The table forth advanc'd it into view.
The rest all gave to him, with bread and flesh 490
Filling his bag. Now, therefore, he prepar'd
Returning to his threshold, there to taste
His mendicated mess, but paus'd awhile
Beside Antinoüs, whom he thus bespake:

Kind sir, vouchsafe to me! for thou appear'st
Not least, but greatest of the Achaïans here,
And hast a kingly look. It might become
Thee therefore above others to bestow,
So should I praise thee wheresoe'er I roam.
I also liv'd the rich possessor once 500
Of such a stately mansion, and have giv'n
To num'rous wand'ers (whencesoe'er they came)
All that they needed; I was also serv'd
By many, and enjoy'd whate'er denotes
The envied owner opulent and blest.
But Jove (for such his pleasure was) dispers'd
At once my riches, prompting me to seek,
With rovers of the flood, the distant shores
Of Ægypt, for my sure destruction there.
Within th' Ægyptian stream my barks I moor'd, 510
And, charging my companions not to stray,
But closely guard the ships, selected some,
Who should ascend the rising grounds, and thence
Descry the country: but on evil bent,
And unrestrain'd by fear, these flew, at once,
To rapine; wasted the delightful fields
Of the Ægyptians, captive brought away
Their wives and little ones, and slew the men.
The city soon alarm'd, at early dawn
Forth came the citizens, both horse and foot, 520
And with the splendour of their dazzling arms
Fill'd all the plain. Then Jove with panic dread
Possess'd my people: none found courage more,
To stand, for mischiefs swarm'd on ev'ry side.
There num'rous by the glitt'ring spear we fell,
While others they conducted thence alive

To toilsome servitude; but me they gave,
Far thence in Cypru's landed, to the king,
Dmetor Iasides, from whom I scap'd
In evil plight, and now seek refuge here. 530

Then answer thus Antinoüs harsh return'd:
What demon introduc'd this nuisance here,
This troubler of our feast? stand yonder, keep
Due distance from my board, or thou shalt see
Ægypt and Cyprus with a vengeance soon,
Both mendicant and destitute of shame!
Thou hauntest each, and, inconsiderate, each
Gives thee, because a gift at others' cost
Is cheap, and, plentifully serv'd themselves,
They squander, heedless, viands not their own. 540

To whom Ulysses, while he slow retir'd:
Gods! how illib'ral with that specious form!
Thou wouldst not grant the poor a grain of salt
From thy own board, who, at another's fed
So nobly, canst not spare a crust to me.

He spake; then ragg'd Antinoüs still the more,
And in wing'd accents, low'ring, thus replied:

Take such dismissal now as thou deserv'st,
Opprobrious! hast thou dar'd to scoff at me?

So saying, he seiz'd his stool, and on the joint 550
Of his right shoulder smote him; firm as rock
He stood, by no such force to be displac'd,
But silent shook his brows, and dreadful deeds
Of vengeance ruminating, sought again
His seat the threshold, where his bag full-charg'd
He grounded, and the suitors thus address'd:

Hear now, ye suitors of the matchless queen!
If, fighting in protection of our own,
Or sheep or oxen, we receive a blow,
We deem the grievance slight; but me the fierce 560
Antinoüs strikes, for that I dare complain
Of hunger, source of num'rous ills to man.
If then, ye Gods! with pitying eyes ye see
The poor man injur'd, bid the Furies seize
Antinoüs, ere his nuptial hour arrive!

To whom Antinoüs answer thus return'd,
Son of Eupithes: Stranger! thou hast food;
Eat therefore, and be still, or now depart;

Lest my young friends, to recompense aright
 Thy curses, drag thee by the feet or hands 570
 This moment forth, and thou be flay'd alive.

He said, whom even they with horror heard
 Themselves, and thus, indignant, one replied:

Antinoüs! thou didst not well to smite
 This hapless vagrant, and the Gods, perchance,
 For thy misdeed will doom us all to die;
 For, in similitude of strangers oft,
 The Gods, who can with ease all shapes assume,
 Repair to populous cities, where they mark
 Th' outrageous and the righteous deeds of men. 580

So they, for whose reproof he little car'd.
 But in his heart Telemachus bewail'd
 His father's wrongs, yet wept not, but his brows
 In silence shaking, teem'd with dire revenge;
 And soon as news of a poor wand'rer bruise'd
 And in her house insulted, reach'd her ears,
 The queen, amidst her women, thus exclaim'd—

So strike Apollo, glorious Archer, thee!
 She said, and thus Eurynome replied:
 Might pray'rs of ours prevail, no suitor there 590
 Should see bright chariotted Aurora more.

Her answer'd then Penelope discreet:
 Nurse! I detest them all, for all alike
 They teem with mischief; but Antinoüs' looks,
 Dark as the frowns of Fate, appal me most.
 A stranger, urg'd by want, the palace roams
 Imploring food from all, which all besides
 Vouchsaf'd him largely, but Eupithes' son
 Antinoüs bruise'd his shoulder with a stool.

While thus the queen conversing with her train 600
 In her own chamber sat, Ulysses made
 Plenteous repast. Then, calling to her side
 Eumæus, thus she signified her will:

My noble friend, Eumæus! hither call
 Yon stranger; I would greet him, and would ask,
 If he have seen Ulysses, or have heard
 Tidings, perchance, of our unhappy lord,
 For much a wand'rer by his garb he seems.

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply:
 Were those Achaians silent, thou shouldst hear, 610

O queen ! a tale, that would thy sorrow sooth.
 Three nights I hous'd him, and within my cot
 Three days detain'd him (for his ship he left
 A fugitive, and came direct to me),
 But half untold his story yet remains.
 As when his eye one fixes on a bard
 From Heav'n instructed in such themes as charm
 The ear of mortals, ever as he sings
 The people press, insatiable, to hear ;
 So, in my cottage, seated at my side 620
 That stranger with his tale enchanted me.
 Laertes, he affirms, hath been his guest
 Erewhile in Crete, where Minos had his birth ;
 And thence, despoil'd of all, and driv'n by fate
 From shore to shore, arriving suppliant here,
 He tells, that in Thesprotia's neighbour realm
 He of Ulysses heard, both that he lives,
 And that he comes with riches laden home.

To whom Penelope, discreet, replied :
 Haste ; call him. I would hear, myself, his tale. 630
 Mean time, let these, or in the palace-gate
 Or in the palace, laugh ; their hearts are light,
 For their full boards intrusion suffer none :
 Their meats, their wines, their own domestics cheer,
 And none besides ; while hither, day by day,
 Themselves resorting, with our sheep, and beeves,
 And fatted goats their ceaseless riot feed,
 Nor spare the richest wines. Thus hourly shrink
 Our copious stores, and there is no control ;
 For no such friend, as was Ulysses once, 640
 Have I t' expel the mischief. But might he
 Revisit once his native shores again,
 Then, aided by his son, he should avenge,
 Incontinent, the wrongs which now I mourn.

Then sneez'd Telemachus with sudden force,
 That all the palace rang ; his mother laugh'd,
 And in wing'd accents thus the swain bespake :

Haste—bid him hither—that propitious sneeze—
 (Didst thou not hear it ?) was my son's reply,
 The voice of instant doom. Their death impends,
 Nor shall one suitor of them all escape. 651
 And mark we well. Should confirmation wait

On his report, he shall from me receive
Mantle and tunic both for his reward.

She spake; he went, and where Ulysses sat
Arriving, in wing'd accents thus began:

Penelope, my venerable friend!
Invites thee, mother of the godlike youth
Telemachus; much troubled, she would learn
From thee some tidings of her absent lord; 660
And should the sequel prove them, will requite
Thy truth with such a boon as most thou need'st,
With vest and mantle; but she gives no more:
With plenteous food the people, if they please,
Can well supply thee; seek it where thou mayst.

Then thus Ulysses, hero toil-inur'd:
Eumæus! I could even now relate
Truth, and truth only, to the prudent queen,
Icarius' daughter; for of him I know 670
Much, and have suffer'd sorrows like his own.
But that this churlish multitude I fear,
The suitors; whose enormities and acts
Of outrage echo through the vault of Heav'n.
For while, this moment, guilty of no crime
Besides, I roam'd the palace, asking bread,
Antinoüs, save a bruise, vouchsaf'd me nought;
Nor could Telemachus avert the blow,
Nor other here. Now, therefore, let the queen,
Howe'er impatient, till the sun descend
Postpone her questions, better far resolv'd 680
What time she may supply me with a seat
Less distant from the fire; for, thinly clad,
As well thou know'st, I reach'd thy friendly door.

He ceas'd; whose answer heard, Eumæus went,
And, meeting him ere yet the swain had pass'd
Her threshold, thus Penelope inquir'd:

Com'st thou alone? What means our wand'ring
guest,
Eumæus; fears he still some heavier harm?
Or is it awe that checks him? Ill befits
A bashful awe the wand'rer and the poor. 690

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply:
He hath well spoken; none, who would decline
The rudeness of this contumelious throng,

Could answer otherwise; he prays thee much,
To wait till sun-set, and that course, O queen,
Thou wilt, thyself, prefer; since more at ease,
Far more, thou shalt converse with him alone.

Then answer thus Penelope return'd :
The stranger, I perceive, is not unwise,
Whoe'er he be; for under Heav'n are none 700
Proud, insolent, and profligate as these.

So spake the queen, whom (all his message told)
Eumæus leaving, join'd the throng again,
And in close-whisper'd accents, lest his words
Should reach the suitors, thus the prince address'd :

Friend and kind master ! I return to keep
My charge the swine, with whatsoe'er besides
Yields sust'nance for us both. Keep thou, meantime,
All here with vigilance, but chiefly watch
For thy own good, and save *thyself* from harm; 710
For num'rous here brood mischief, whom the Gods
Exterminate, ere yet their plots prevail !

To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied :
My father, finishing thy next repast,
Return as thou hast said, and hither drive
At early dawn fresh victims for the day,
Well-chosen; with assistance of the Gods
Myself and mine, the while, shall rest secure.

He ended; then resum'd once more the swain
His polish'd seat, and, both with wine and food 720
Now sated, to his charge return'd, the court
Leaving, and all the palace throng'd with guests;
They (for it was now evening) all alike
Turn'd jovial to the song and to the dance.

BOOK XVIII.

Argument.

The beggar Irus arrives at the palace; a combat takes place between him and Ulysses, in which Irus is by one blow vanquished. Penelope appears to the suitors, and having reminded them of the presents which she had a right to expect from them, receives a gift from each. Eurymachus, provoked by a speech of Ulysses, flings a footstool at him, which knocks down the cup-bearer; a general tumult is the consequence, which continues, till by the advice of Telemachus, seconded by Amphinomus, the suitors retire to their respective homes.

NOW came a public mendicant, a man
Accustom'd seeking alms, to roam the streets
Of Ithaca; one never sated yet
With food or drink; yet muscle had he none,
Or force, though tall and of gigantic size.
Arnæus, in the day which gave him birth,
His mother call'd him; but, jocosely bent,
The suitors, with whose messages he sped
From place to place, for his employment's sake,
All nam'd him Irus. From his own abode, 10
Arriving there, this coarse intruder sought
T' expel Ulysses, whom he thus rebuk'd:

Forth from the porch, old man! or by the feet
I drag thee forth. Perceiv'st thou not a wink
On ev'ry brow? They bid me to the task,
Which I, through rev'rence of thy years alone,
As yet decline. Rise, therefore, or with fists
We must contend, in evil hour for thee.

To whom Ulysses, low'ring, thus replied:
Friend! neither word austere nor deed of mine 20
Hath injur'd thee, nor, whatsoe'er thou gain,
Shall I with envious eyes regard the boon.
The sill may serve us both. Thou dost not well

To grudge *me* food, who seem'st thyself forlorn,
 Not less than I; since that the wand'rer wins,
 Or less or more, is all the gift of Heav'n.
 But move me not to box; lest, sore incens'd,
 Though worn with age, sufficient force I find,
 To fill thy mouth and bosom with thy blood.
 So my attendance should to-morrow prove 30
 More tranquil here; for thou shouldst leave, I judge,
 Ulysses' mansion, never to return.

Then answer'd Irus, kindling with disdain:
 Ye Gods, how voluble in his harangue
 The hungry wretch! How like a wither'd hag
 Begrim'd with smoke he prates! but ah, beware!
 For I intend thee mischief, and to dash
 With both hands ev'ry grinder from thy gums,
 As men untooth a pig pilf'ring the corn.
 Come—gird thee, that all here may view the strife—
 But how wilt thou oppose one young as I? 41

Thus on the threshold of the lofty gate
 They, wrangling, chaf'd each other, whose dispute
 The high-born youth Antinoüs mark'd; he laugh'd
 Delighted, and the suitors thus address'd:

O friends! no pastime ever yet occur'd
 Delectable as this, which Heav'n itself
 Now yields us. Irus and the stranger brawl,
 As they would box. Haste—urge them lest they cool.

He said; they, laughing, started at the word, 50
 And flew at once on all sides to surround
 The tatter'd pair; when thus Antinoüs spake:

Attend ye noble suitors to my voice.
 The paunches of two goats lie broiling here,
 Which, fill'd with sav'ry pulp, we plac'd apart
 For supper; the victorious shall of these
 Election make, and shall with us thenceforth
 Feast always; nor shall mendicant, except
 Himself alone, find entrance here again.

He spake, whom all approv'd; next, artful chief,
 Ulysses thus, dissembling, them address'd: 61

Princes! unequal is the strife between
 A young man and an old with mis'ry worn;
 But hunger, always counsellor of ill,

Me moves to fight, that, many a bruise receiv'd,
 I may be foil'd at last. Now, therefore, swear
 A solemn oath, that none, for Irus' sake,
 Shall interfere to smite me, that, subdu'd
 By force superiour, I may yield the prize.

He ceas'd, and, as he bade, all present swore 70
 A solemn oath; then thus, amid them all
 Telemachus, illustrious youth, began:

Guest! if thy spirit prompt thee to the task,
 Fearless of all besides, expel him hence.
 For whoso dares smite thee, shall soon receive
 Himself a large requital; I am here
 In the host's office, and the royal chiefs,
 Antinoüs and Eurymachus, alike
 Discreet, accord unanimous with me.

He ceas'd, whom all approv'd. Then, girding close
 His rags about his loins, Ulysses bar'd 81
 His round and brawny thighs, his ample chest,
 Huge arms, and shoulders broad; while, at his side,
 Dilating more the hero's limbs and more
 Minerva stood; the assembly with fix'd eyes
 Astonish'd gaz'd on him, and, looking full
 On his next friend, a suitor thus remark'd:

Irus in Irus shall no more be found,
 Irus himself the cause. What youthful force
 Surviving in old age those tatters hid! 90

So he—mean time in Irus' heart arose
 Horrible tumult; yet, his loins by force
 Girding, the servants dragg'd him to the fight
 Pale, and his flesh all quiv'ring as he came;
 Whose terrours thus Antinoüs rebuk'd:

Now, wherefore liv'st, and why wast ever born,
 Thou mountain-mass of earth! if such dismay
 Shake thee at thought of combat with a man
 Enfeebled by distress, and worn with age?
 But mark, I threaten not in vain; should he 100
 Subdue thee, and in force superiour prove,
 My bark shall bear thee, cast into her hold,
 T' Epirus, realm of Echetus, the pest
 And terrour of mankind; of nose and ears
 He shall despoil thee with his ruthless steel,

And tearing by the roots the parts away,
That mark thy sex, shall cast them to the dogs.

He ended, and still more the trembler's limbs
Shook under him; into the middle space
They led him, and each rais'd his hands on high. 110
Then stood Ulysses musing and in doubt,
Whether to strike him lifeless to the ground
At once, or fell him with a manag'd blow.

To smite with manag'd force at length he chose
As wisest, lest, betray'd by his own strength,
He should be known. Each rais'd his fist, and each
Assail'd his opposite. Him Irus struck
On the right shoulder; but Laertes' son
Full on the neck and close beneath his ear
Smote Irus with a force that snapp'd the bones. 120

He, spouting through his lips a crimson stream,
With chatt'ring teeth and hideous outcry fell,
And with his heels, recumbent, thump'd the ground.
Loud laugh'd the suitors, lifting each his hands,
As they would die; when, seizing fast his heels,
Ulysses dragg'd him through the palace-door,
Athwart his area to the distant porch,
Where, placing him reclin'd against the wall,
He gave him his rude staff, and thus he said:

There seated now dogs drive and swine away, 130
Nor claim (thyself so base) supreme control
O'er other guests and mendicants, lest harm
Befall thee next, still heavier to be borne.

So saying, his old patch'd wallet by the twist
Once more he slung, and, turning to the sill,
His seat resum'd. The suitors, as he turn'd,
Turn'd also; still they laugh'd, and, at his side
Assembling, thus their gratitude express'd:

Jove, and all Jove's assessors in the skies,
Vouchsafe thee, stranger, whatsoe'er it be, 140
Thy heart's desire! who hast our ears reliev'd
From that insatiate beggar's irksome tone.
T' Epirus, realm of Echetus, that fierce
And ruthless tyrant, shall he soon depart.

Thus greeted, with delight Ulysses caught
The joyful omen. Then Antinoüs plac'd
The well-fill'd paunch before him, and two loaves.

From his own store Amphinomus, who charg'd
His goblet also, drank to him, and said :

My father, hail ! O stranger, be thy lot 150
Hereafter blest, however now severe !

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied :
Amphinomus ! to me thou seem'st endu'd
With such discretion as befits the son
Of such a sire, whose fair report I know,
Dulichian Nysus, opulent and good.
By rumour thou art his ; and prudence show'st
That speaks that rumour true. Now, therefore, hear.
Earth nourishes, of all that breathe or creep,
No creature weak as man ; for while the Gods 160
Grant him firm health and plenty, neither fear
Nor thought hath he, that he shall ever mourn :
But when the Gods with evils unforeseen
Smite him, he bears them with a grudging mind ;
For such as the complexion of his lot
By the appointment of the Sire of all,
Such is the colour of the mind of man.

Myself have also known in other days
Both wealth and ease ; but I was then self-will'd,
And many wrong'd, embolden'd by the thought 170
Of my own father's and my brethren's pow'r.
Deal, therefore, none unjustly, but let each
Use modestly what gift soe'er of Heav'n.
So do not these. These ever bent I see
On deeds injurious, the possessions large
Consuming and dishonouring the wife
Of one, who will not, as I judge, remain
Long absent from his home, but is, perchance,
Ev'n at the door. Thee, therefore, may the Gods
Steal hence in time ! ah, meet not his return 180
To his own country ! for no bloodless strife
Shall his, believe me, with the suitors prove,
Should once he reach his long-sought home again.

He ended, and, libation pouring, quaff'd
The gen'rous juice, then in the prince's hand
Replac'd the cup ; he, pensive, and his head
Inclining low, pass'd from him ; for his heart
Foreboded ill ; yet scap'd not even he,
But in the snare of Pallas caught, his life

To the heroic arm and spear resign'd 190
Of brave Telemachus. He, therefore, sought
The throne whence he had ris'n, and sat again.

And now Minerva, Goddess azure-ey'd,
Inspir'd Icarius' daughter with the thought,
T' appear before the suitors; so t' expose
Their impious drift the more, and that herself
Still more illustrious in Ulysses' eyes
Might shine, and in her sons. She forc'd a smile,
Dissembling her distress, and thus she said:

A wish, Eurynome! ne'er felt before, 200
(For I detest them all) now prompts me much,
T' appear before the suitors; I, perchance,
May somewhat speak, that shall induce my son,
T' associate less with those, who give him words
Of oily smoothness, but his death intend.

Then answer thus Eurynome return'd:
My daughter! thou hast wisely said and well.
Bathe, therefore, first, and o'er thy cheeks diffuse
The grace of unction; then, suppressing nought,
Advise thy son; but show not there thy face 210
Sullied with tears, for 'vantage none derives
From ceaseless grief; and thou hast cause of joy,
Since thy Telemachus a bearded youth
Thou seest, whom such it was thy pray'r to see.

Her answer'd then Penelope discreet:
Persuade not me, though studious of my good,
Eurynome! to bathe or to anoint
My face with oil; for when Ulysses sail'd,
On that same day, the Pow'rs of Heav'n deform'd
And wither'd all my beauties; therefore haste, 220
Hippodamia bring, and bring with her
Autonoe, for I shall need them both
T' attend me there: since decency forbids,
That I should enter to the men alone.

She ceas'd; and, as she bade, her ancient nurse
Hasted to summon whom she had enjoin'd.

Then Pallas azure-ey'd occasion found,
To visit with the balmy dews of sleep
Icarius' daughter; on her wonted couch
Reclining, soon as she reclin'd, she doz'd, 230
And yielded to soft slumber all her frame.

Then, that the suitors might admire her more,
 The glorious Goddess cloth'd her, as she lay,
 With beauty of the skies; her lovely face
 With such ambrosial unguent first she bath'd,
 As Cytherea chaplet-crown'd employs
 Herself, when in the sight-entangling dance
 She joins the Graces; more majestic size
 And stature next she gave her, and her hue
 Made fairer than the elephantine bone 240
 Fresh from the carver's hand. These gifts conferr'd
 Divine, the glorious Deity retir'd.

And now, loud-prattling as they came, arriv'd
 Her handmaids; sleep forsook her at the sound,
 She wip'd a falling tear, and thus she said:

Care-soothing sleep—how welcome to the soul
 Distress'd as mine! I would that, with a touch
 As gentle, chaste Diana would herself
 This moment set me free, that I might waste
 My life no longer in heart-felt regret 250
 Of a lamented husband's various worth
 And virtue, for in Greece no peer had he!

She spake, and, her magnificent recess
 Forsaking, downward went; nor went she sole,
 But with those two fair menials of her train.
 Arriving, most majestic of her sex,
 In presence of the num'rous guests, beneath
 The portal of the stately dome she stood
 Between her maidens, cover'd, not conceal'd,
 And shining through her veil. The sudden blaze 260
 Astonish'd them, and with intense desire
 Fill'd each, to make the beauteous prize his own;
 When thus the queen her list'ning son bespake:

Telemachus! thou art no longer wise,
 As once thou wast, and even when a child.
 For though thy bloom, thy stature, and thy size
 Bespeak thee such, that, even at a glance,
 A stranger would discern thy princely birth,
 Still is thy judgment weak and immature.
 For what is this? why suffer'st thou a guest 270
 To be abus'd in thy own palace? how?
 Know'st not, that, if the stranger seated here
 Endure vexation, the disgrace is thine?

Her answer'd then Telemachus discreet :
 I blame thee not, my mother, that thou feel'st
 Thine anger mov'd ; yet want I not a mind
 Of strength to mark and to discern between
 Evil and good ; for, though not now a child,
 I find not truly promptitude of thought
 Sufficient always, overaw'd and check'd 280
 By such a multitude, all bent alike
 On mischief, of whom none takes part with me.
 But Irus and the stranger have not fought,
 Urg'd by the suitors ; and the stranger prov'd
 Victorious. O Apollo, Pallas, Jove !
 I would that in the house and in the court
 The suitors all sat vanquish'd, with their heads
 Depending low, and with enfeebl'd limbs,
 Even as that same Irus, with his chin
 Propp'd on his bosom, in the portal sits, 290
 Drooping as he were drunk, too feeble now,
 To stand erect, or seek his proper home.

So they ; and now, addressing to the queen
 His speech, Eurymachus thus interpos'd :

O daughter of Icarius ! could all eyes
 Throughout Iasian Argos view thy charms,
 Discreet Penelope ! more suitors still,
 Assembling in thy courts at early dawn,
 Would banquet here ; for thou surpasses far
 In beauty, stature, worth, all womankind. 300

To whom replied Penelope discreet :
 Eurymachus ! my talents and my charms
 The Gods ordain'd should wither all and die,
 When with the Greeks Ulysses sail'd to Troy.
 Could he, returning, guide as he was wont
 My doubtful steps, I should at once display
 More worth, and merit far superiour praise.
 But grief now mars me, such perpetual storms
 Have been my portion.—When he left his home,
 Clasp'ing my wrist with his right hand, he said : 310

My love ! for I imagine not, that all
 The warrior Greeks shall safe from Troy return,
 Since fame reports the Trojans brave in fight,
 Skill'd in the spear, mighty to draw the bow,
 And nimble vaulters to the backs of steeds

High-mettled, which to speediest issue bring
The dreadful struggle of all-wasting war—
I know not, therefore, whether Heav'n intend
My safe return, or I must perish there.
But manage thou at home. Neglect not aught 320
My parents of my filial aid bereft,
But, rather for that cause, more kindly still
Think on them; and what time our son thou seest
Mature, then wed; wed even whom thou wilt,
And hence to a new home.—So counsell'd he,
And all his counsel shall be now perform'd.
For, ah! the night arrives, when hapless I,
My wealth all wasted by the will of Jove,
Must meet perforce the nuptials, which I dread.
But this thought now torments me, and my mind 330
Continual haunts. Such was not heretofore
The suitors' custom'd practice; all who chose,
T' engage in competition for a wife
Well-qualitied and well-endow'd, produc'd
From their own herds and fatted flocks a feast
For the bride's friends, and splendid presents made,
But ne'er consum'd, as ye, bread not their own.

She ceas'd; and in his heart Ulysses felt
Some joy, that, soothing them, she sought to draw
From each some gift, although on other views, 340
And more important far, himself intent.

Then thus Antinoüs, Eupithes' son:
Icarius' daughter! deign but to receive
Such gifts as we shall bring, for gifts demand
That grace, nor can be decently refus'd;
But neither fields nor mansions of our own
Seek we, be sure, till first thy choice be made
Of the Achaian, chief in thy esteem.

Antinoüs spake, whose answer all approv'd.
Then each dispatch'd his herald, who should bring 350
His master's gift. Antinoüs' herald first
A mantle of surpassing beauty brought,
Wide, various, with no fewer clasps adorn'd
Than twelve, all golden; twelve on either side.
From the same hand Eurymachus receiv'd
A sun-bright chain of amber and of gold.
The gift by rich Eurydamas design'd

Two servants bore; a broad ear-pendant each,
Of dazzling light profuse, and triple-gemm'd.
And next a collar from his herald's hand, 360
A splendid ornament, Polyctor's son,
Pisander, took. Thus ev'ry suitor gave,
And each a gift dissimilar from all.

Then sought the queen her chamber, after whom
Her maidens bore the gifts. Mean time to dance
And pleasant song, till ev'ning should arrive,
The suitors turn'd, and when the dusky shades
Of ev'ning fell, three vases on the floor
They plac'd, that should illumine the spacious hall;
These with dry fuel-wood all newly riv'n 370
And intermix'd with torches they supplied,
And damsels watch'd by turns and fed the fires,
Whom thus Ulysses, ever-wise, address'd:

Ye servants of your long-regretted lord
Ulysses, to th' interiour house retire,
And to your virtuous queen, that following there
Your sev'ral tasks, spinning and combing wool,
Ye may amuse her; I, mean time, for these
Will furnish light, and, should they choose to stay
Till golden morn appear, they shall not tire 380
My patience aught, for I can much endure.

He said; they, titt'ring, on each other gaz'd.
But one, Melantho with the blooming cheeks,
Rebuk'd him rudely. Dolius was her sire,
But by Penelope she had been rear'd
With care maternal, and in infant years
Supplied with many a toy; yet even she
Felt not her mistress' sorrows in her heart,
But, of Eurymachus enamour'd, oft
His lewd embraces met; she, little won 390
By brave Ulysses' kindness, thus replied:

Why—what a brainsick vagabond art thou!
Who neither to the smithy wilt, for sleep,
Nor to the public portico repair,
But, here remaining, with audacious prate
Disturb'st this num'rous company, restrain'd
By no respect or fear; is wine the cause,
That thus thou speak'st, or wast thou born a fool?
Or art thou drunk with joy, that thou hast foil'd

The beggar Irus ? Tremble, lest a man 400
 Stronger than Irus suddenly arise,
 Whose fists shall on thy batter'd brows descend
 With dreadful force, and drive thee, foul as blood,
 Thine own, can make thee, to some other home.

To whom Ulysses, frowning stern, replied :
 Snarler ! I will this moment to the prince,
 Thy master, in whose ear I will report
 Thy speech, and he shall hew thee limb by limb.

So saying, he scar'd the women ; back they flew
 Into the house, but each with falt'ring knees 410
 Through dread, for they believ'd his threats sincere.
 He then, illumin'd by the triple blaze,
 His station still maintaining, watch'd the fires ;
 But in his soul mean time far other thoughts
 Resolv'd, tremendous, not conceiv'd in vain.

Nor Pallas (that they might exasp'rate more
 Laertes' son) permitted to refrain
 From heart-corroding bitterness of speech
 Those suitors proud ; Eurymachus began,
 The son of Polybus ; and while he mock'd 420
 Ulysses sharply, set them in a roar :

Hear me, ye suitors of th' illustrious queen !
 I shall promulge my thought. This man, methinks,
 Not unconducted by the Gods, hath reach'd
 Ulysses' mansion ; for to me the light
 Of yonder torches altogether seems
 His own, an emanation from his head,
 Which not the smallest growth of hair obscures.

He ceas'd, and next the city-wasting chief,
 Ulysses, thus address'd : Art thou dispos'd, 430
 So that myself were willing, to commence
 A lab'rer at my farm ? thou shalt not want
 Sufficient wages ; thou mayst there collect
 Stones for my walls, and plant my thriving oaks,
 For which I would supply thee through the year
 With food, and clothes, and sandals for thy feet.
 But thou hast learn'd less creditable arts,
 Nor hast a will to work, preferring much,
 By beggary from street to street, t' obtain
 Wherewith to feed thy never-sated maw. 440

Then answer, thus, Ulysses wise return'd :

Forbear, Eurymachus; for were we match'd
 In work against each other, thou and I,
 Mowing in spring-time, when the days are long,
 I with a well-bent sickle in my grasp,
 And thou with one in thine, for trial sake
 Of our ability to toil unfed
 Till night, grass still sufficing for the proof;—
 Or if, again, it were our task to drive
 Yok'd oxen of the noblest breed, sleek-hair'd, 450
 Big-limb'd, both batten'd to the full with grass,
 Their age and aptitude for work the same,
 Not soon to be fatigu'd; and were the field
 In size four acres, with a glebe through which
 The share might smoothly slide, then shouldst thou
 see

How straight my furrow should be cut and true.—
 Or should this day Saturnian Jove excite
 Here battle, or elsewhere, and I were arm'd
 With two bright spears and with a shield, and bore
 A brazen casque well-fitted to my brows, 460
 Me then thou shouldst perceive in fight engag'd
 Amid the foremost chiefs, nor with the crime
 Of idle begg'ry shouldst upbraid me more.
 But thou art much a railer, one whose heart
 No pity moves, and to thyself appear'st
 A mighty man and valiant, for no cause,
 But that thy social intercourse is small—
 Thou hast few friends, and those of little worth.
 But should Ulysses come, these ample doors
 Should seem, at once, to thee too strait to pass, 470
 To shoot thee forth with speed enough abroad.

He ceas'd—then tenfold indignation fir'd
 Eurymachus; he furrow'd deep his brow
 With frowns, and in wing'd accents thus replied :
 Wretch ! for this insolence, with which thou dar'st
 Offend this num'rous company, myself
 Will now requite thee well. Is wine the cause
 That thus thou speak'st, or wast thou born a fool ?
 Or thou art frantic haply with delight,
 That thou hast foil'd yon vagabond obscure. 480

He said, and seiz'd a stool. Ulysses saw,
 Not fearless of its flight, th' uplifted harm,

And at the knees of the Dulichian prince,
 Amphinomus, an instant refuge sought.
 He, therefore, in his stead, th' attendant struck,
 Who bore the beaker; smitten from his hand
 Down dropp'd the vessel, rang against the ground,
 And with loud shriek the suff'rer fell supine.
 Then tumult loud arose; the gloomy roof
 Resounded, and a suitor thus exclaim'd: 490

I would that, ere he caus'd such tumult here,
 This mendicant had died! we now contend
 Not for the queen, but for a beggar's sake,
 And must despair, since thus we can dispute
 For such a cause, that peace and social joy
 Shall ever crown our banquets here again.

So he; and next amid them all arose
 Telemachus himself, and thus he spake:
 Sirs! ye are mad; forgetful of your wine,
 And of your food alike; some angry God 500
 Confounds you; finish therefore duly now
 Your joyless feast, and seek your sev'ral homes,
 At your own time, for none goes forc'd by me.

He ceas'd; they gnawing stood their lips, aghast
 With wonder, that the prince had in his speech
 Such freedom shown and boldness. Then arose
 The son of Nisus, offspring of the king
 Aretus, brave Amphinomus, and said—

My friends! let none with contradiction thwart,
 And rude reply, words rational and just; 510
 Cease; neither strike the stranger here, nor strike
 A servant of renown'd Ulysses more;
 But let some youth, attendant on the wine,
 From right to left dispense it, that, at last
 Libation made, we may retire to rest,
 Each at his proper home, and leave the prince,
 T' accommodate beneath his father's roof
 The stranger, for the prince's guest is he.

He ceas'd, whom all approv'd. The hero, then,
 Dulichian Mulus, herald of himself, 520
 Amphinomus, a beaker charging high,
 Serv'd all. They, pouring to the blessed Gods
 Libation, drank; and when such measure each
 Had ta'en as pleas'd him, sought their sev'ral homes.

BOOK XIX.

Argument.

Ulysses and Telemachus remove the arms from the hall to an upper chamber. The hero then confers with Penelope, to whom he gives a fictitious narrative of his adventures. Eury-
clea, while she bathes Ulysses, discovers him by a scar on his knee, but he prevents her communication of that discovery to Penelope.

THUS him the suitors in his palace left,
Contriving with Minerva's aid fit means
To slay them all; when to his son he said—
Telemachus, we must dispose, my son!
All these our implements of war within;
And should the suitors, missing them, inquire
Where are they? thou shalt answer calmly thus—
I have convey'd them from the reach of smoke,
For they appear no longer those, which erst
Ulysses, sailing hence for Ilium, left, 10
So smirch'd and sullied by the breath of fire.
This weightier reason (thou shalt also say)
Some God suggested to me,—lest, inflam'd
With wine, ye wound each other in your brawls,
Shaming both feast and courtship; for the view
Itself of arms incites to their abuse.

He ceas'd; and, at his word, th' obedient prince
Call'd Euryclea forth, his nurse, and said—

Nurse! shut the women close; while I remove
My father's arms, through long neglect of mine 20
In childhood, sullied by these smoky fires.
My chamber best will suit them, danger none
Of smoke is there, and thither shall they now.

Then thus the gentle matron in return:
I would, my son, that thou wouldst use the pow'r,

Which thy discretion gives thee, to control
And manage all! But their removal hence
If none may witness, who shall bear the light?

To whom Telemachus discreet replied:

This guest; for no man, at my table fed, 30
Come whence he may, shall be an idler here.

He ended, nor his words flew wing'd away,
But Euryclea bolted ev'ry door.

Then, starting to the task, Ulysses caught,
And his illustrious son, the weapons thence,
Helmet, and bossy shield, and pointed spear,
While Pallas from a golden lamp diffus'd
A beauteous light around them. At that sight
Alarm'd the prince his father thus address'd:

Whence—whence is this, my father? I behold 40
A prodigy! the house on either side,
With all its num'rous arches, columns, beams,
Shines in my sight, as with the blaze of fire!
Some Pow'r celestial, doubtless, is within.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied:

Soft; ask no questions. Give no vent to thought.
Such is the custom of the Pow'rs divine.

Hence, thou, to rest. I stay, that I may move
And int'rest much thy mother, and provoke
Her women also; neither short nor made 50
With slight concern shall her inquiry prove.

He ended, and the prince, at his command,
Guided by flaming torches, sought the couch
Where he was wont to sleep, and there he slept
On that night also, waiting the return
Of sacred dawn. Thus left, Ulysses, deep
In thought immers'd, sat framing fittest means,
By Pallas' aid, for slaughter of his foes.

At length, Diana-like, or like herself, 60
All-golden Venus (her apartment left),
Enter'd Penelope. Beside the hearth
Her women planted her accustom'd seat
With silver wreath'd and ivory. That throne
Icmalius form'd, and had with nicest art
A footstool to the splendid frame adjoin'd,
Which ever with an ample fleece they spread.
There sat discreet Penelope; then came

Her beautiful attendants from within,
 Who soon displac'd the tables, and from each
 The scatter'd food collected, and the cups, 70
 From which those insolent companions drank.
 Its embers, next, from each inverted vase
 They pour'd, and with fresh billets pil'd them high,
 Both for illumination and for warmth.
 Then yet again Melantho with rude speech
 Opprobrious, thus, assail'd Ulysses' ear:

Hast thou resolv'd, then, stranger! to remain
 All night a troublesome intruder here,
 That thou mayst watch the women? Hence—
 abroad—

Glad of such fare as thou hast found, or soon 80
 With torches beaten we will thrust thee forth.

To whom Ulysses, frowning stern, replied:
 Why these invectives, mistress? and thy wrath—
 Why thus pursues it me? for that my face
 Shines not with oil? for that my garb is mean?
 For that I beg? to my distress impute
 These crimes; all mendicants commit the same.
 I also liv'd the rich possessor once
 Of such a stately mansion, and have giv'n
 To num'rous wand'ers, whencesoe'er they came, 90
 All that they needed; I was also serv'd
 By many, and enjoy'd whate'er denotes
 The envied owner opulent and blest.
 But Jove (for such his pleasure was) reduc'd
 My much to nought. Thou, therefore, also fear,
 Lest, fairest of thy sister-menials now,
 Thou forfeit all those beauties; fear besides,
 Lest by some rudeness thou provoke the queen,
 And lest Ulysses come, of whose return
 Hope yet survives; but even though the chief 100
 Have perish'd, as ye think, and comes no more,
 Consider yet the prince; his growth; his age;
 Apollo's gifts; no woman here can hide,
 As erst she might, her trespass from his eye,
 For all his heedless years have pass'd away.

He ended, whom Penelope o'erheard,
 And her attendant sharply thus rebuk'd:
 Shameless, audacious woman! known to me

Is thy great wickedness, which with thy life
 Thou shalt atone; for thou wast well aware 110
 (Hearing it from myself) that I design'd
 This stranger's stay, for close inquiry's sake
 Of my long lost and most lamented lord.

Then to her mistress of the stores she said—
 Eurynome! bring hither for the guest
 A cover'd seat, for sitting he shall hear
 And answer best my questions, like to prove
 Not few, nor satisfied with short reply.

She spake; Eurynome with brisk dispatch
 A seat supplied with fleecy cover spread, 120
 On which at once the toil-accustom'd chief
 Reposing, thus Penelope began:

Stranger! my first inquiry shall be this—
 Who art thou? whence? where born, and sprung
 from whom?

Then answer thus Ulysses, wise, return'd:
 O queen! uncensurable by the lips
 Of mortal man! thy glory climbs the skies
 Unrivall'd, like the praise of some great king,
 Who, o'er a num'rous people and renown'd
 Presiding like a Deity, maintains 130
 Justice and truth. Their harvests overswell
 The sower's hopes; their trees, o'erladen, scarce
 Their fruit sustain; no sickness thins the folds:
 The finny swarms of ocean crowd the shores,
 And all are rich and happy for his sake.
 Me therefore question of what else thou wilt
 In thy own palace, but forbear t' inquire
 From whom I sprang, and of my native land,
 Lest recollection of those tender themes
 Augment my woes; for I have much endur'd: 140
 Tears are forbidden us, and sighs, beneath
 Another's roof; uninterrupted grief
 Is evil; and thy women might suspect
 (Perchance thyself), that wine too largely ta'en,
 Not sorrow, caus'd the deluge of my tears.

Him answer'd then Penelope discreet:
 Alas! my talents, stranger! and my charms
 The Gods ordain'd should wither all and die,
 When with the Greeks Ulysses sail'd to Troy.

Could he, returning, guide as he was wont 150
My doubtful steps, I should at once display
More worth, and merit far superiour praise.
But grief now mars me, such perpetual storms
Have been my portion; for as many chiefs
As hold dominion in the neighbour isles,
Samos, Dulichium, and the forest-crown'd
Zacynthus; others, also, rulers here
In pleasant Ithaca, me, loth to wed,
Woo ceaseless, and my stores consume the while.
I therefore neither guest nor suppliant heed, 160
Nor public herald more, but with regret
Of my Ulysses wear my soul away.
They mean time press my nuptials, which by guile
I still procrastinate. Some God the thought
Suggested to me, to design a robe
Of amplest measure and of subtlest woof,
And thus t' address them, using no delay.
Princes, my suitors! since the godlike chief
Ulysses is no more, enforce not now
My nuptials; wait till I shall finish first 170
A fun'ral robe (lest all my threads decay)
Which for his royal father I prepare,
Laertes, looking for the mournful hour,
When ruthless Fate shall seize him for her own.
Else I the censure dread of all my sex,
Should he, so wealthy, want at last a shroud.
Thus speaking I prevail'd. Thenceforth I wove
All day that ample web, and by the blaze
Of torches, ravell'd it again at night.
Three years by this pretext deceiv'd, they ceas'd 180
To press me more; but when the fourth arriv'd,
And the same season after many moons
And fleeting days return'd, then passing safe
The dogs, by these my careless women left
Still chain'd, they reach'd my chamber, my design
At once discern'd, and threaten'd fierce revenge.
Thus, through necessity, not choice, at length
Have I completed the laborious task,
Nor other specious plea can I devise,
Or refuge find; for day by day themselves 190
My parents urge my nuptials, and my son

(Of age to note it) with disgust observes
 His wealth consum'd ; for abler youth than he,
 To rule his house, or by the Gods endow'd
 With more illustrious qualities, is none.
 Yet, stranger, after all, speak thy descent ;
 For whencesoe'er thou cam'st, nor ancient oak,
 Nor hollow rock, I judge, gave birth to thee.

Her answer'd then Ulysses, ever-wise :
 Unblemish'd consort of Laertes' son ! 200
 Resolv'st thou still to learn from whom I sprang ?
 Learn then ; but know, that thou shalt much augment
 My present grief, natural to a man,
 Who hath, like me, long exil'd from his home,
 Through various cities of the sons of men—
 Wander'd remote, and num'rous woes endur'd.
 Yet will I tell thee, with what pain soe'er.

There is a land amid the sable flood,
 Call'd Crete ; fair, fruitful, circled by the sea.
 Num'rous are her inhabitants, a race 210
 Not to be summ'd, and ninety towns she boasts.
 Various their speech is ; some Achaians are,
 And some indigenous ; Cydonians these,
 Those Dorians ; others of Pelasgian race.
 One city far in size the rest exceeds,
 Cnossus ; a city sway'd by Minos erst,
 Who, ever at a nine-years close, conferr'd
 With Jove himself ; from him my father sprang,
 Deucalion ; and Deucalion's consort bore
 Two sons, Idomeneus the king, and me. 220
 To Troy my royal brother with the sons
 Of Atreus sail'd. The youngest born am I ;
 Not more behind Idomeneus in years,
 Than in renown, and Æthon is my name.
 There I beheld and entertain'd beneath
 My roof, Ulysses ; for a furious wind
 Had driv'n him from Malea (while he sought
 The shores of Troy) to Crete. His barks he moor'd
 Within the stream Amnisus, for the cave
 Of Ilithya known, a dang'rous port, 230
 Where scarce, at last, his fleet escap'd the storm.
 He, landing, instant to the city went,
 Seeking Idomeneus, of whom he spake

As of a friend long-known and much esteem'd.
 But *he* was far remote, ten days advanc'd,
 Perhaps eleven, on his course to Troy.
 Beneath my roof he, therefore, found his home
 (A plenteous one himself), and for his band
 By public contribution I procur'd
 Corn, wine, and beeves, till they could wish no more.
 Twelve days his noble Grecians there abode, 241
 Port-lock'd by Boreas blowing with a force
 Resistless even on the land, some God
 So rous'd his fury; but the thirteenth day
 The wind all fell, and forth they sail'd again.

With many a specious fiction, thus he sooth'd
 Her list'ning ear; she, melting at the sound,
 With drops of tend'rest grief her cheeks bedew'd;
 And as the snow, by Zephyrus diffus'd,
 Melts on the mountain tops, when Eurus breathes, 250
 And fills the channels of the running streams,
 So melted she, and down her lovely cheeks
 Pour'd fast the tears, him mourning as remote
 Who sat beside her. Soft compassion touch'd
 Ulysses of his consort's silent wo;
 Yet wept not he, but, well-dissembling still,
 Suppress'd his grief, fast rivetting his eyes,
 As they were each of horn or hammer'd steel,
 Till she, with overflowing tears at length
 Sate, replied, and thus inquir'd again: 260

Now, stranger! mark me well; now prove thy truth.
 If thou, indeed, hast entertain'd in Crete
 My spouse and his brave followers, as thou say'st,
 Describe his raiment and himself; his own
 Appearance, and the appearance of his friends.

Then her Ulysses answer'd, ever-wise:
 Hard is the task, O queen! (so long a time
 Hath since elaps'd) to tell thee. Twenty years
 Have pass'd since he forsook my native isle,
 Yet, from my best remembrance, I will give 270
 A likeness of him, such as now I may.
 A double cloak, thick-pil'd, Mæonian-dy'd,
 The noble chief had on; two golden clasps
 Secur'd it, and the clasps display'd in front
 A well-wrought pattern with much art design'd.

A hound between his forefeet holding fast
 A dappled fawn, gap'd eager on his prey.
 All wonder'd, seeing how, in lifeless gold
 Express'd, the dog with open mouth her throat
 Attempted still; and how the fawn, with hoofs 280
 Thrust trembling forward, still essay'd to fly.
 That glorious mantle much I notic'd, soft
 To touch, as the dried garlick's glossy film;
 Such was the smoothness of it, and it shone
 Sun-bright; full many a maiden, trust me, view'd
 The splendid texture with admiring eyes.
 But mark me now; deep treasure in thy mind
 This word. I know not if Ulysses wore
 That cloak at home, or whether of his train
 Some warrior gave it to him on his way, 290
 Or else some host of his; for many lov'd
 Ulysses, and with him might few compare.
 I gave to him, myself, a brazen sword,
 A purple cloak magnificent, and vest
 Of royal length, and, when he sought his bark,
 With princely pomp dismiss'd him from the shore.
 A herald also waited on the chief,
 Somewhat his senior; him I next describe:
 His back was bunch'd; his visage swarthy; curl'd
 All o'er his fleecy poll; and he was nam'd 300
 Eurybates; Ulysses' nearest friend,
 And of a mind congenial with his own,
 He ceas'd; she, conscious of the proofs, with tears
 More copious still confess'd them genuine all,
 And, when at length tears fail'd her, thus replied:
 Till now my guest for pity's sake, henceforth
 Such shalt thou be for friendship's dearer sake.
 I folded for him with these hands the cloak
 Which thou describ'st, produc'd it when he went,
 And gave it to him; I that splendid clasp 310
 Attach'd to it myself, t' adorn the more
 My godlike husband, who shall never reach
 His native home, nor tread these shores again;
 Hard, therefore, was his lot, that e'er he sail'd.
 To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied:
 Unblemish'd consort of Laertes' son!
 No longer pine with needless grief, nor vex

Thy gentle heart for lost Ulysses' sake.
And yet I blame thee not; a wife depriv'd
Of her first mate, to whom she had produc'd 320
Fair fruit of mutual love, would mourn his loss,
Although of worth inferiour far to thine,
Whom fame affirms the semblance of the Gods.
But cease to mourn; for I will now relate
A faithful tale, nor will from thee withhold
Such tidings of Ulysses living still,
And of his homeward course, as I have heard
Not distant far, but in the neighbour land
Of the Thesprotians. He returns enrich'd
With many precious stores, from those obtain'd 330
Whom he hath visited; but he hath lost,
Departing from Thrinacia's isle, his bark,
And all his lov'd companions, in the Deep,
For Jove was adverse to him, and the Sun,
Whose beeves his followers slew. They perish'd all
Amid the billowy flood; but him, the keel
Bestriding of his bark, the waves at length
Cast forth on the Phæacians' land, a race
From Neptune sprung, who rev'renc'd like a God
Thy husband, honour'd him with num'rous gifts, 340
And offer'd him, themselves, safe passage home.
Ulysses, therefore, had attain'd long since
His native shore, but that he deem'd it best
To travel far, that he might still amass
More wealth; so far he passes all mankind
In gainful arts, in which no peer hath he.
This knowledge from Thesprotia's king I gain'd,
From gen'rous Phidon; to myself he swore
In his own house, the goblet in his hand,
That both the bark was launch'd, and all her crew
Then waiting to conduct him to his home. 351
But me he first dismiss'd; for, as it chanc'd,
A galley of Thesprotia lay prepar'd,
To seek Dulichium; many a chest was there
With treasures of Ulysses fill'd, a store
To feed the house of an inferiour prince
To the tenth generation; so immense
His riches were within that palace lodg'd.
Of him he spake as to Dodona gone,

T' implore Jove's counsel in his oaken bow'rs, 360
Whether, so late returning, he should seek
His kingdom openly, or in disguise.

Him, therefore, deem secure ; nor distant far,
Nor doom'd to longer exile from his home
And from his friends. I swear a solemn oath.
First Jove be witness, King and Lord of all !
Next these domestic Gods of the renown'd
Ulysses, in whose royal house I sit,
That thou shalt see my saying all fulfill'd.

Ulysses shall this self-same year return, 370
This self-same month, ere yet the next begin.

Him answer'd then Penelope discreet :
Fail not this word of thine, my friend ! and soon
I will enrich thee so, that all who meet
Or but behold thee, shall pronounce thee blest.

But ah ! my soul forebodes far other end ;
Neither Ulysses will return, nor thou
Receive safe conduct hence ; for we have here
None, such as once Ulysses was, to rule
His household with authority, and to send 380
With honourable convoy to his home
The worthy guest, or to regale him here.

Give him the bath, my maidens ; spread his couch
With linen soft, with fleecy gaberdines,
And rugs of splendid hue, that he may lie
Waiting, well-warm'd, the golden morn's return.
At early dayspring also serve him well
With bath and unction, that, his seat resum'd
Here in the palace, he may be prepar'd

For breakfast with Telemachus ; and wo 390
Be that man's portion, who shall incommode
Or cause him pain ; for him will I cashier
Next moment, burn his anger as it may.

For whence, my guest ! should thy belief arise,
That I deserve past other of my sex
The praise of wisdom, if unbath'd, unoil'd,
Ill-clad, thou sojourn here ? man's life is short.

Whoe'er is cruel, and to cruel arts
Addicted, all on him, while yet he lives,
Call plagues and curses down, and after death 400
Scorn and proverbial mock'ries hunt his name.

But the benevolent and just, who treats
The stranger kindly, from his lips obtains
A good report, which others, where he dwells,
With pleasure hear, and further still diffuse.

Her answer'd, then, Ulysses ever-wise:
Unblemish'd consort of Laertes' son!
Warm gaberdines and rugs of splendid hue
To me have odious been, since first the sight
Of Crete's snow-mantled mountain-tops I lost, 410
Sweeping the billows with extended oars.
No; let me pass, as I am wont to pass,
The sleepless night; for on a sordid couch
Outstretch'd, full many a night have I repos'd,
Till golden-chariotted Aurora dawn'd.
Nor me the foot-path pleases more; my foot
Shall none of all thy minist'ring maidens touch,
Unless there be some ancient matron grave
Among them, who hath pangs of heart endur'd
Num'rous, and keen as I have felt myself; 420
Her I refuse not. She may touch my feet.

Then answer thus Penelope return'd:
Dear guest! for of all trav'lers here arriv'd
From distant regions, have I none receiv'd
Prudent as thou, nor whom for his discreet
And faultless manners I have more esteem'd,
I have a matron even to thy wish,
Who, when my poor ill-fated lord was born,
Receiv'd and nurs'd him; she shall wash thy feet,
Though now scarce able.—Euryclea, rise! 430
Wash one coeval with thy lord; for such
The feet and hands, I doubt not, are become
Of our Ulysses, now; since man, beset
With sorrow once, soon wrinkled grows and old.
She said; then Euryclea, with both hands
Cov'ring her face, in tepid tears profuse
Dissolv'd, and thus in mournful strains began:

Alas! my son, affliction for thy sake
Distracts me. Surely Jove of all mankind
Most hated thee, though piety like thine 440
He found not oft; for never mortal man
So many thighs of fatted victims burn'd,
And chosen hecatombs produc'd as thou,

To Jove the Thund'rer, him entreating still,
 That he would grant thee a serene old age,
 And to instruct, thyself, the prince, thy son.
 Yet thus the God requites thee, cutting off
 All hope of thy return—oh, ancient sir!
 Him too, perchance, where'er he sits a guest
 Beneath some foreign roof, the women taunt, 450
 As all these shameless ones have taunted thee,
 Fearing whose mock'ry thou forbidd'st their hands
 This office, which Icarius' daughter wise
 To me consigns, and which I, glad, perform.
 Yes; not for her sake only, but for thine,
 This task will I perform; for thou hast rais'd
 A tempest in my soul. Hear now the cause!
 Full many a guest forlorn we shelter here,
 But none of all hath in his form and size,
 In shapely feet, in deep and mellow voice 460
 Such likeness of Ulysses shown as thou.

To whom Ulysses, ever shrewd, replied:
 Such close similitude, O ancient dame!
 As thou perceiv'st between us, all alike,
 Who have beheld us both, have ever found.

He said: then taking the resplendent vase
 Allotted always to that use, she first
 Infus'd cold water largely, then the warm.
 Ulysses (for beside the hearth he sat)
 Turn'd hastily toward the shade, alarm'd 470
 Lest, handling him, she should at once remark
 His scar, and all his stratagem unveil.
 She then, approaching, minister'd the bath
 To her own king, and at first touch discern'd
 That token, by a savage boar of old
 Impress'd, what time he to Parnassus went,
 To visit there Autolycus and his sons,
 His mother's noble sire, who far-excell'd
 In furtive arts and oaths all humankind.
 For such endowments he by gift receiv'd 480
 From Hermes' self, whom with the thighs of lambs
 And kids he gratified, and, in return,
 The watchful Hermes never left his side.
 He, visiting Laertes on a time,
 Then king in Ithaca, the new-born son

Of his own daughter found, whom on his knees
At close of supper Euryclea plac'd,
And thus the royal visitant address'd :

Thyself, Autolycus ! devise a name
For this thy daughter's son, by num'rous pray'rs 190
Of thine and fervent, from the Gods obtain'd.

Then answer thus Autolycus return'd :
My daughter and my daughter's spouse ! the name,
Which I shall give your boy, that let him bear.
Since, after much success at other's cost,
And much hostility provok'd, I come,
Call him Odusseus ; and, in future time,
When he shall visit, at an age mature,
My mansion in Parnassus, where, of late,
His mother dwelt, and where my treasures lie, 500
Rich will I send him thence, and joyful home.

Ulysses, therefore, that he might obtain
Those princely gifts, went thither. Him arriv'd
With right-hand gratulation and with words
Of welcome kind, Autolycus receiv'd,
Nor less his offspring ; but the mother most
Of his own mother clung around his neck,
Amphithea ; she with many a fervent kiss
His forehead press'd, and his bright-beaming eyes.
Then bade Autolycus his noble sons 510
Set forth a banquet. They, at his command,
A bullock introduc'd, five years his age,
Which flaying first, they spread him carv'd abroad,
Then scor'd his flesh, transfix'd it with the spits,
And roasting all with culinary skill,
Gave each a share. Thus, sitting, they prolong'd
All day the feast, and till the sun declin'd ;
But when the sun declin'd, and darkness fell,
Each sought his couch, and took the gift of sleep.
Then, soon as day-spring's daughter, rosy-palm'd 520
Aurora, look'd abroad, forth went the hounds,
And, with the hounds, Ulysses and the youths,
Sons of Autolycus, to chase the boar.
Arriv'd at the Parnassian mount, they climb'd
The bushy sides, and to the loftiest lairs
Erelong attain'd. It was the pleasant hour,
When, from the gently-swelling flood profound

Emerging bright, the sun first smote the fields.
The hunters scour'd the thickets; foremost ran
The questing hounds, behind them came the youths,
Sons of Autolycus, with whom advanc'd 531
The illustrious prince, Ulysses, pressing close
The hounds, and brandishing his massy spear.
There, hid in thickest shades, a huge boar lay.
That covert neither rough winds blowing moist
Could penetrate, nor could the noonday sun
Smite through it, or fast-falling show'rs pervade,
So thick it was, and underneath, the ground
With litter of dry foliage strew'd profuse.
Hunters and dogs approaching him, his ear 540
The sound of feet perceiv'd; upridging high
His bristly spine, and glaring fire, he sprang
Forth from the shrubs, and in defiance stood
Near and right opposite. Ulysses first
Assail'd him with his elevated spear,
Ardent to wound him; but the boar, his thrust
Preventing, gall'd him first above the knee,
Much flesh, obliquely striking him, he tore
With his rude tusk, yet reach'd not to the bone.
But him Ulysses piercing in the brawn 550
Of his right shoulder, urg'd his weapon through.
He, screaming, fell and died. With instant haste
Around Ulysses his companions throng'd;
With dext'rous promptitude his wound they brac'd,
With charmed charms restrain'd the sable blood,
And sought at once their home; thence, soon as heal'd,
His hosts, rejoicing in his cure, dismiss'd
Their happy guest, enrich'd with many a gift.
His parents, in his native isle, with joy
Their son receiv'd, and of his hurt inquir'd; 560
He told them all the truth—how while he scour'd
The thickets of Parnassus with his friends,
Sons of Autolycus, a savage boar
Impress'd the deep memorial with his tooth,
That scar, while chafing him with open palms,
The matron knew; she left his foot to fall;
Down dropp'd his leg into the vase; the brass
Rang, and, o'ertilted by the sudden shock,
Pour'd forth the water, flooding wide the floor.

Her spirit joy at once and sorrow seiz'd ; 570
Tears fill'd her eyes ; her intercepted voice
Died in her throat ; but, with a trembling hand
Stretch'd forth to clasp his beard, at length she spake :

Thou art himself, Ulysses. O my son !
Dear to me, and my master as thou art,
I knew thee not, till I had touch'd the scar.

She said, and right toward the queen her eyes
Directed, all impatient to declare
Her own Ulysses even then at home.

But she, though seated opposite, immers'd 580
In deepest thought by Pallas, neither heard
Nor aught observ'd of all. Then, seizing fast
Her throat with his right hand, and with his left
Pressing her nearer on himself, he said :

Nurse ! why wouldst thou destroy me ? From thy
breast

The milk, that fed me, flow'd. Much grief, much toil
Have I sustain'd, and in the twentieth year
Regain my country. Thou hast learn'd the truth ;
Such was the will of Heav'n. But hush—be still—
Lest others also learn it from thy lips. 590

For this I say, nor shall the threat be vain ;
If God, propitious, grant me to destroy
Those suitors, when I shall my wrongs avenge
On all these worthless ones who serve the queen,
Although my nurse, thyself shalt also die.

Him answer'd Euryclea then, discreet :
What speaks my son ! How scap'd that dreadful word
Thy guarded lips ; my faithfulness of old
Thou know'st, and even now shalt prove me firm
As iron, secret as the stubborn rock. 600

But hear and mark me well. Shouldst thou prevail,
By Pow'r divine assisted, to destroy
The haughty suitors, I will then, myself,
Teach thee to judge the women, and discern
Th' unfaithful many from the duteous few.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied ;
Nurse ! wherefore this ? Instruction none I need,
Sufficient of myself. Hold thou thy peace.
Be that thy part, and leave the rest to Heav'n. 609
He spake ; then, leaving him, forth went the nurse,

That she might serve him with a second bath,
For the whole first was spilt. Thus, lav'd at length,
And smooth'd with oil, Ulysses nearer pull'd
His seat toward the glowing hearth, t' enjoy
More warmth, and drew his tatters o'er the scar.
When, prudent, thus Penelope began :

One question, stranger, I shall yet propound,
Though brief; for soon the hour of soft repose,
Sweet even to the most forlorn on whom
Sleep sheds his grateful influence, will arrive. 620

But measure none hath Heav'n to my distress
Assign'd; my sole delight is to consume
My days in sighs, while here retir'd I sit,
Tasking my women, and myself employ'd;
But (night return'd, and all to bed retir'd)
I press mine also, yet with deep regret
And anguish lacerated, even there.

As when at spring's first entrance, her sweet song
The azure-crested nightingale renews,
Daughter of Pandareus; within the grove's 630

Thick foliage perch'd, she pours her echoing voice
Now deep, now clear, with ever-varied strains
Deploring Itylus, whom she destroy'd

(Her son by royal Zethus) unaware,
So changeful are my thoughts, while here I muse
Uncertain, whether I shall still remain

For my son's sake at home, a faithful guard
Of his and mine, house, women, household stores,
My spotless honour, and my nuptial bed;

Or whether of my wooers I shall choose 640
Who noblest seems, and offers richest dow'r.

My son, while infant and of heedless years,
Would not that I should leave him and forsake
His father's home; but now, to manhood thriv'n,

He ev'n entreats me to depart, incens'd
For his fair patrimony thus consum'd.

But I have dream'd. Hear, and expound my dream.
My geese are twenty, which within my walls
I feed with sodden wheat; they serve to amuse

Sometimes my sorrow. From the mountains came 650
An eagle huge, hook-beak'd, brake all their necks,
And slew them; scatter'd on the palace-floor

They lay, and he soar'd swift into the skies.
 Dream only as it was, I wept aloud,
 Till all my maidens, gather'd by my voice,
 Arriving, found me weeping still, and still
 Complaining, that an eagle had at once
 Slain all my geese. But to the palace-roof
 Stooping again, he sat, and, with a voice
 Of human sound, my tears forbidding, said— 660

Take courage, daughter of the glorious chief
 Icarius ! no vain dream hast thou beheld,
 But, in thy sleep, a truth. The slaughter'd geese
 Denote thy suitors, and myself, who seem
 An eagle in thy sight, am yet indeed
 Thy husband, who have now, at last, return'd,
 Death, horrid death designing for them all.

He said ; then waking at the voice, I cast
 An anxious look around, and saw my geese
 Beside their tray, all feeding as before. 670

Her then Ulysses answer'd, ever-wise:
 O queen ! interpretation cannot err,
 Unless perversely, since Ulysses' self
 So plainly spake th' event. Sure death impends
 O'er ev'ry suitor, he shall slay them all.

To whom Penelope discreet replied:
 Dreams are inexplicable, O my guest !
 And ofttimes mere delusions, that receive
 No just accomplishment. Two sev'ral gates
 Transmit those airy phantoms. One of horn, 680
 And of sawn iv'ry one. Such dreams as pass
 The gate of ivory, prove empty sounds ;
 While others, through the polish'd horn effus'd,
 Whose eye soe'er they visit, never fail.

But thence, methinks, that awful dream of mine
 Came not ; thrice welcome were it else to me,
 And to my son. Now mark my words ; attend.
 The dreaded morn appears, which sends me far
 From this lov'd home for ever. To decide
 Their rival claims, this day shall I produce 690
 Twelve rings inserted in twelve pointed stakes,
 Which, set by line, like galley-ribs, his mark
 Ofttimes Ulysses made, and, from afar,
 Would speed his well-aim'd arrow through them all.

Such is the test to which I shall invite
This day the suitors. Him who soonest bends
The stubborn bow, and, with successful aim
His keen shafts levelling, thrids all the rings,
I follow, this dear mansion of my youth
Leaving, so fair, so fill'd with ev'ry good, 700
Though still to love it even in my dreams.

Her answer'd then Ulysses, ever-wise:
Unblemish'd consort of Laertes' son!
Delay not; bring them instant to the proof;
For ere long-lab'ring they prevail to bend
That bow so stubborn, and to speed the shaft
Through those twelve rings, Ulysses will arrive.

To whom Penelope, discreet, replied:
Couldst thou, my guest! unwearied, still console
And sooth me thus, these wakeful lids of mine 710
Should never close; but sleep is by the will
And ord'nance of the Gods, and to resist
Sleep always, far exceeds all pow'r of Man.
I therefore, seeking my recess above,
Will lay me, sighing, down on my sad couch,
Moist with my tears, e'er since Ulysses went
To that bad city, never to be nam'd.
There will I sleep; but sleep thou here below,
Either thyself preparing on the ground
Thy couch, or on a couch by these prepar'd. 720

So saying, not sole, but with her female train
Attendant on her steps, ascending thence
She sought her stately chamber; there arriv'd
She mourn'd her lov'd Ulysses, till at length,
By Pallas shed, soft slumber seal'd her eyes.

BOOK XX.

Argument.

Ulysses, doubting whether he shall destroy or not the women servants, who commit lewdness with the suitors, resolves at length to spare them for the present. He asks an omen from Jupiter, and that he would grant him also to hear some propitious words from the lips of one in the family. His petitions are both answered. Preparation is made for the feast. Whilst the suitors sit at table, Pallas smites them with a horrid frenzy. Theoclymenus, observing the strange effects of it, prophecies their destruction, and they deride his prophecy.

BUT in the vestibule the godlike chief,
Ulysses, lay. The fleeces of his sheep,
Slain by the suitors, o'er a bullock's hide
New-stripp'd he cast, then press'd his hasty couch,
And cover'd by the dame, his ancient nurse,
With a warm mantle, meditating lay
Wo to his enemies. Mean time, the train
Of women wonted to the suitors' arms,
All sought their sev'ral mates, and, as they went,
Titt'ring and jesting lewdly, fill'd his heart 10
With doubts tumultuous, whether then at once
To slay, or to permit them yet to give
Their lusty paramours one last embrace.
As growls the mastiff standing on the start
For battle, if a stranger's foot approach
Her cubs new-whelp'd—so growl'd Ulysses' heart,
While wonder fill'd him at their impious deeds.
But, smiting on his breast, he thus reprov'd
The mutinous inhabitant within.

Heart! bear it. Worse than this thou didst endure, 20

What time, invincible by force of man,

The Cyclops on thy brave companions fed.
Then thou wast patient, though a thousand fears
Possess'd thee, till thy wisdom set thee free.

His own heart thus he disciplin'd, which bore
With firmness the restraint, and in his breast
Rebell'd not; yet he turn'd from side to side
As when some hungry swain o'er glowing coals
A paunch for food prepares, from side to side
He turns it oft, and scarce abstains the while; 50
So he from side to side roll'd, pond'ring deep,
How likeliest with success he might assail
Those shameless suitors; one to many oppos'd.
Then Pallas, stooping from the skies, in form
A woman, o'er the musing hero's head
Her station took, and thus the Goddess spake:

Why sleep'st thou not, unhappiest of mankind?
Thou art at home; here dwells thy wife, and here
Thy son; a son, whom all might wish their own.

Whom thus Ulysses answer'd, ever-wise: 40
O Goddess! just is all that thou hast said;
But, not without solicitude, I muse,
How, with success, alone I shall assail
My shameless, num'rous, never-failing guests,
The suitors; this thought pains me; but a thought,
Still weightier, more. If, through your sov'reign aid
(Thine and thy Father's), I should slay them all,
How shall myself escape? O Goddess! think.

To whom the blue-ey'd Goddess in reply:
O void of faith! a mortal man will trust 50
His friend, though mortal, and in valour less
And wisdom than himself; but I, who keep
Thee in all difficulties, am divine.
I tell thee plainly. Were we throng'd around
By fifty bands, all ambush'd, and prepar'd
To slay thee, thou shouldst yet securely drive
The flocks and cattle of them all away.
But yield to sleep's soft influence; sleepless nights
Themselves are painful, and erelong, be sure,
Thou shalt emerge from under all thy woes. 60

So saying, o'er Ulysses' eyes she shed
Soft slumbers, and when sleep, that soothes the mind,
And nerves the limbs afresh, had seiz'd him once,

Departing, sought th' Olympian heights again.
But his chaste spouse awaking, wept reclin'd
On her soft couch, and, noblest of her sex,
Sate at length with tears, her pray'r address'd
To Dian first of all the Pow'rs above.

Diana! virgin Goddess! sprung from Jove!
I would that, with a shaft this moment sped 70
Into my bosom, thou wouldst here conclude
My mournful life! or, O that, as it flies,
Snatching me through the pathless air, a storm
Would overwhelm me deep in Ocean's restless tide!
So sudden tempests caught the daughters fair
Of Pandareus away; their parents died
By wrath divine, and they were left forlorn;
But Venus nourish'd them with curds, with wine,
And honey; Juno gave them to surpass
All women both in feature and in mind; 80
With graceful stature eminent thyself
Didst deign to bless them; and, in female tasks
Ingenious, Pallas with superiour skill.
But when the foam-sprung Goddess to the skies
A suitress went on their behalf, to obtain
Blest nuptials for them from the Thund'rer Jove
(For Jove the happiness, himself, appoints,
And the unhappiness of all below),
Mean time, swift Harpies ravishing away
Those virgins, gave them to the Furies Three, 90
That they might serve them. O that me the Gods
Inhabiting Olympus so would hide
From human eyes, or Dian strike me dead!
That while Ulysses yet hath all my thoughts,
My days concluded, I might scape the pain
Of gratifying some inferiour chief!
This is supportable, when (all the day
To sorrow giv'n) the mourner sleeps at night;
For sleep, if once it veil the tearful eye,
All reminiscence blots of all alike, 100
Both good and ill; but me the Gods afflict
Not seldom ev'n in dreams, and at my side
This night the likeness of Ulysses lay,
Such as myself beheld him when he sail'd
With his brave Ithacans; my bounding heart

No fleeting dream believ'd it, but a truth.
While thus she spake, in orient gold enthron'd
Came forth the morn. Ulysses, at the voice,
Well-nigh believ'd himself already known,
And that his wife stood weeping at his side. 110

He started, gather'd in his arms the cloak
And fleeces, plac'd them on a seat within,
But carried forth the ranker hide abroad,
Where thus, with lifted hands to Jove, he pray'd:

Eternal Sire! if, after num'rous woes
By land and on the Deep, I reach, at length,
With full consent of Heav'n my native home,
Vouchsafe me, from the lips of one awake
Within these walls, an omen, and bid sound
Thy own peculiar signal from above. 120

Such pray'r he made, and Jove omniscient heard.
Sudden he thunder'd from the radiant heights
Olympian; glad, Ulysses heard the sound.
A woman next, then lab'ring at the mill
Hard by, where all his num'rous mills he kept,
Gave him the sign propitious from within.
Twelve damsels toil'd to turn them, day by day,
Meal grinding, some of barley, some of wheat,
Marrow of man. The rest (their portion ground)
All slept; one only from her task as yet 130
Ceas'd not, for she was feeblest of them all;
She rested on her mill, and thus pronounc'd,
Unconscious for whose sake, th' auspicious word:

Jove, Father, Governor of Heav'n and Earth!
Loud thou hast thunder'd from the starry skies
By no cloud veil'd; a sign propitious, giv'n
To whom I know not; but O grant the pray'r
Of a poor bondwoman! appoint their feast
This day the last that in Ulysses' house
The suitors shall enjoy, for whom I drudge, 140
Grinding, to weariness of heart and limb,
Meal for their use. Here feast they never more!

She ended, and the list'ning chief receiv'd
With equal joy both signs, convinc'd by both
That he should punish soon those guilty men.
And now, returning to their sev'ral tasks,
The women on the palace-hearth renew'd

Its sprightly blaze, and from his couch arose
 Godlike Telemachus; he, soon attir'd,
 His belted falchion o'er his shoulder slung, 150
 Bound his bright sandals, grasp'd his sturdy spear
 Steel-pointed, and, advancing to the porch,
 Of Euryclea thence aloud inquir'd:

Nurse! have ye with respectful notice serv'd
 Our guest? or hath he found a sordid couch
 E'en where he might? for, prudent though she be,
 Sometimes my mother errs; with kindness treats
 The worthless, and the worthy with neglect.

He ceas'd, and Euryclea thus replied:
 Son! blame not her, who merits now no blame. 160
 The guest sat drinking till he would no more,
 And ate, till, question'd, he replied—Enough.
 And when the hour invited to repose
 Herself and him, she gave her women charge
 To spread his couch. Yet he, like one forlorn,
 And, through despair, indiff'rent to himself,
 Both bed and rugs refus'd, and in the porch
 On fleeces slept, and on a raw rank hide,
 Beneath a cloak cast over him by me.

She ceas'd; then, grasping his bright-headed spear,
 With his fleet hounds beside him, issu'd forth 171
 Telemachus, to join th' assembled Greeks
 In council; with majestic gait he mov'd,
 And Euryclea, daughter wise of Ops,
 Pisenor's son, the women thus enjoin'd:

Haste—stand not idle—sweep the palace-floor
 And sprinkle it; then give the sumptuous seats
 Their purple coverings. Let others cleanse
 With sponges all the tables, wash and rinse
 The beakers well, and the resplendent cups; 180
 Run others to the fountain, and bring thence
 Water with speed; for all the suitor-train
 In haste to celebrate this joyous day,
 Apollo's festival, will soon arrive.

She spake, whom all, obedient, heard; forth went
 Together twenty to the crystal fount,
 While others well their tasks perform'd at home.
 Then came the serving-men and split the wood;
 The women next with water from the fount,

Whom soon the swineherd follow'd, driving three
 Selected brawns, which in the spacious court 191
 He feeding left, and, with a friendly voice
 Addressing him, Ulysses thus bespake :

Guest ! look the Grecians on thee with respect
 At length, or still disdainful as before ?

Then answer thus Ulysses wise return'd :
 Yes—and I would that vengeance from the Gods
 Might pay their insolence, who thus usurp
 Dominion here, and, in another's house,
 With no respect of right, or dread of shame, 200
 Much evil daily work, and purpose more.

Thus they conferr'd ; and now Melanthius came
 The goatherd, driving, with the needless aid
 Of those two swains, the fattest of his goats,
 To feast the suitors. In the sounding porch
 The goats he tied, then, drawing near, in terms
 Reproachful thus assail'd Ulysses' ear :

How, stranger ? persever'st thou, begging, still
 To vex the suitors ? wilt thou not depart
 Till blows shall separate us, and thou taste, 210
 For thy regale to day, this fist of mine ?
 Thou art unreasonable thus to beg
 Here always—have the Greeks no feast beside ?

He spake, to whom Ulysses answer none
 Return'd, but shook his brows, and, silent, fram'd
 Terrible purposes. Then third approach'd
 A master-swain, Philæti^{us} ; fatted goats
 He for the suitors brought, with which he drove
 A heifer ; from the continent they came,
 Thence in the public ferry wafted o'er. 220
 He tied them in the sounding porch, then stood
 Beside the swineherd, whom he thus bespake :

What foreign guest, Eumæus ! hath arriv'd
 Of late amongst us ? Is his country known ?
 His lineage and degree ? not such by birth
 I judge him as he seems, but rather far
 Some hapless prince. The Gods indeed delight
 To plunge the wand'ers of the world in wo,
 When thus they destine even kings to mourn.

He ceas'd ; and with his right hand, drawing nigh,
 Welcom'd Ulysses, whom he thus bespake : 231

Hail, hoary guest ! hereafter mayst thou share
Delights not fewer than thy present pains !
O Jove, of all the Gods thou most severe !
Kings reign by Thee ; yet though by Thee they reign,
Thou spar'st not even kings, whom oft we see
Plung'd by thyself in gulfs of deepest wo.
Soon as I saw thee, Sir ! tears dimm'd my sight,
And sweat bedew'd my forehead, at the thought
Of dear Ulysses ; for if yet he live 240
And see the sun, such tatters, I suppose,
He wears, a wand'rer among humankind.
But if already with the dead he dwell
In Pluto's drear abode, oh then, alas
For kind Ulysses ! who consign'd to me,
While yet a boy, his Cephallenian herds,
Now multiplied to such a countless store,
As only care like mine could have produc'd.
These, by command of others, I transport
For their regale, who neither heed his son, 250
Nor fear the righteous vengeance of the Gods,
But long have wish'd impatient to divide
And share the substance of our absent lord.
Me, therefore, this thought occupies, and haunts
My mind not seldom ; while his heir survives,
It were no small offence to drive his herds
Afar, and migrate to a foreign land ;
Yet here to dwell, afflicted and oppress'd,
Their slave for whom I rear them, seems to me
Still less supportable ; and I had fled, 260
And I had serv'd some other mighty chief
Long since (for patience fails me to sustain
My present lot), but that I cherish still
Some hope of my long-banish'd lord's return,
To rid his palace of these lawless guests.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied :
Herdsman ! since neither void of sense thou seem'st
Nor yet dishonest, but myself am sure,
That thou art owner of a mind discreet,
Hear now my solemn oath, I first adjure 270
Jove and this hospitable board, and next
The Lares of the noble chief, whose hearth
Protects me now, that, ere thy going hence,

Ulysses surely shall have reached his home,
And thou shalt see him, if thou wilt, thyself,
Slaying these tyrant troublers of his house.

Him answer'd then Philæti^{us}. Jove perform,
As thou hast said ! and quickly shalt thou see
This arm, how prompt and strenuous in his aid.

Eumæus also ev'ry pow'r of Heav'n 280
Entreated, that Ulysses might possess
His home again. Thus mutual they conferr'd.

Mean time the suitors secretly prepar'd
Death for Telemachus ; but while they sat
Consulting, unpropitious, on the left
An eagle soar'd, which grasp'd a tim'rous dove.
Then thus Amphinomus the rest bespake :

My friends ! these consultations, how to slay
Telemachus, will never smoothly run
To their effect ; but let us to the feast. 290

So spake Amphinomus, whose counsel pleas'd.
Then all into the royal house repair'd,
And, on the thrones and couches throwing off
Their mantles, slew the fatted goats, the sheep,
The swine, and heifer from the distant herd.
The roasted entrails first they shar'd, then fill'd
The beakers, and the swineherd plac'd the cups ;
Philæti^{us}, chief intendant of the beeves,
Serv'd all with bread in platted baskets neat,
While all their cups Melanthius charg'd with wine,
And they assail'd at once the ready feast. 301

Mean time Telemachus, with honest guile,
Within the spacious hall, but close beside
The threshold, plac'd his father, for whose use
A sordid seat he found and scanty board.
A portion of intestines next he set
Before him, fill'd a golden goblet high,
And thus, in presence of them all, began :

There seated now, drink as the suitors drink.
I will, myself, their biting taunts forbid, 310
And violence. This edifice is mine,
Not public property ; my father first
Possess'd it, and my right from him descends.
Suitors ! control your tempers and your tongues,
Nor with your hands offend, lest strife ensue.

He ceas'd; they gnawing, sat, their lips, aghast
With wonder, that Telemachus in his speech
Such boldness us'd. Then spake Eupithes' son,
Antinoüs, and the assembly thus address'd:

Let pass, my friends! these menaces, though rude,
And scarcely to be borne; the will of Jove 321
Concurr'd not, else our orator's harangues,
Now rapid in their course, had ceas'd to flow.

So spake Antinoüs, whom Ulysses' son
Heard unconcern'd. And now the heralds came
In solemn pomp, conducting through the streets
A hecatomb, and in the dusky grove
Of Phœbus, glorious archer of the skies,
The Grecians met. Mean time the sav'ry roast
Finish'd, and from the spits withdrawn, the guests
Shar'd equally the feast, and, as they serv'd 331
The suitors, in like sort th' attendants serv'd
Ulysses also; for the hero's son
Himself, Telemachus, had so enjoin'd.
But Pallas (that they might exasp'rate more
Ulysses) suffer'd not the suitor chiefs
To banquet guiltless of heart piercing scoffs
And violence. There was a suitor nam'd
Ctesippus, born in Samos; coarse he was
And insolent, and, in his father's wealth 340
Confiding, had presum'd to woo the wife
Of long-exil'd Ulysses. From his seat
That man the haughty suitors thus address'd:

Ye noble suitors, I would speak; attend!
The guest is serv'd; he hath already shar'd
Equal with us; nor less demand the laws
Of hospitality; for neither just
It were nor decent, that a guest, receiv'd
Here by Telemachus, should be denied
His portion of the feast. But now myself 350
Will give him wherewithal he may requite
The woman his attendant when he bath'd,
Or whatsoever menial else he will.

So saying, he from a basket near at hand
Heav'd an ox-foot, and with a vig'rous arm
Hurl'd it. Ulysses gently bow'd his head,
Shunning the blow, but gratified his just

Resentment with a broad sardonic smile
Of dread significance. He smote the wall.
Then thus Telemachus rebuk'd the deed : 360

Ctesippus, thou art fortunate ; the bone
Struck not the stranger, for he shunn'd the blow ;
Else, had I surely driv'n my glitt'ring lance
Right through thee ; then had no connubial rites
Of thine in Ithaca thy sire employ'd,
But thy funereal. No man therefore treat
Me with indignity within these walls ;
For though of late all-heedless and a child,
I now can well distinguish good from ill.
We have endur'd much wrong, our flocks devour'd,
Our corn and wine consum'd ; for what could I, 371
Single, against your numbers ? be content
Now, therefore, and abstain from future harm
And outrage done to me ; but if alone
My death can satisfy you, death itself
I would account more eligible far,
Than thus to witness your atrocious deeds
Day after day ; to see my guests abus'd,
With blows insulted, and the women dragg'd
With lewd and forceful license, to the shame 380
And foul dishonour of my noble home.

He said, and all sat silent, till at length
Thus Agelaüs spake, Diastor's son :
My friends ! let none with contradiction thwart,
And rude reply, words rational and just ;
Assault no more the stranger, and let all
The women of renown'd Ulysses dwell
In quiet here. My counsel to the queen,
And to Telemachus, shall gentle be,
May it but please them. Long as hope surviv'd 390
Within your bosoms of the safe return
Of wise Ulysses to his native isle,
So long good reason was, that she should hold,
While yet she might, our wooing in suspense ;
For had Ulysses come, that course had prov'd
Wisest and best ; but that he comes no more,
Appears now manifest. Thou, therefore, prince !
Seeking thy mother, counsel her to wed
That suitor who shall yield her amplest dow'r,

That thou, for thy peculiar, mayst enjoy 400
Thy own inheritance in peace and ease,
And she, departing, find another home.

To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied :
I swear by Jove, and by my father's woes,
Who either hath deceas'd afar from home,
Or roams we know not where, that hindrance none
Retards my mother's nuptials fram'd by me ;
Choose whom she may, my farewell gifts shall speak
Me well content, so bounteous shall they be.
But to dismiss her rudely were an act 410
Unfilial—That I dare not—God forbid !

So spake Telemachus. Then Pallas struck
The suitors with delirium ; wide they stretch'd
Their jaws with unspontaneous laughter loud ;
Their meat dripp'd blood ; tears fill'd their eyes, and
dire

Presages of approaching wo, their hearts.
Then godlike Theoclymenus exclaim'd :

Ah miserable men ! what curse is this,
That takes you now ? night wraps itself around
Your faces, bodies, limbs ; the palace shakes 420
With peals of groans—and oh, what floods ye weep !
I see the walls and arches dappled thick
With gore ; the vestibule is throng'd, the court
On all sides throng'd with apparitions grim
Of slaughter'd men deep sinking in the gloom
Of Erebus ; the sun is blotted out
From Heav'n, and midnight whelms you premature.

He said ; they, hearing, laugh'd ; and thus the son
Of Polybus, Eurymachus, replied :

This wand'rer from a distant shore hath left 430
His wits behind. 'Hoa there ! conduct him hence
Into the forum ; since he dreams it night
Already, teach him there that it is day.

Then answer thus the godlike seer return'd :
No need, Eurymachus ! of guides have I
To lead me hence ; for I have eyes and ears,
Two feet uncripp'l'd, and a mind exempt
From sickly dotage and delusions wild.
These shall conduct me forth, for well I know
Your doom at hand, a doom which, trust me, none

Shall scape of all the suitors, whose delight 441
Is mischief, and t' insult what guest soe'er
Ulysses' hospitable doors receive.

He said, and issuing from the palace, sought
Piræus' house; he welcom'd his return.

Then all the suitors on each other cast

A look significant, and, to provoke

Telemachus, with gibes his guest pursu'd,

And insolently thus a youth remark'd:

Telemachus! thy guests, of all who roam, 450
Are sure the vilest. Witness this forlorn

And hungry wretch, who never drinks or eats

Save what he begs, and whose unmanly breast

No courage warms:—a cumb'rer of the ground.

Next comes another, subject, as it seems,

To sudden fits of prophecy. But hear,

For I will teach thee, wilt thou but be taught.

E'en let us bind them, and, transporting both

To Lemnos, sell them at what price we may.

So spake the suitor, whom Ulysses' son 460

Heard unconcern'd, and, silent, look'd and look'd

Toward his father, vigilant to seize

The sign for slaughter of his shameless foes.

Penelope, mean time, the chaste, the wise,

Icarius' daughter, from a splendid seat

Plac'd opposite within her own recess

Heard all their mock'ries. They, with noisy mirth,

Feasted deliciously, for they had slain

Many a fat victim; but a sadder feast,

Than soon the Goddess and the warrior chief 470

For them should furnish, none shall ever share,

Of which their crimes had furnish'd first the cause.

BOOK XXI.

Argument.

Penelope proposes to the suitors a contest with the bow, herself the prize. They prove unable to bend the bow; when Ulysses, having with some difficulty possessed himself of it, manages it with the utmost ease, and dispatches his arrow through twelve rings erected for the trial.

NOW came the dreadful hour, when Pallas urg'd
Icarius' lovely daughter, the discreet
Penelope, with bow and rings to prove
Her suitors in Ulysses' courts, a strife
Most fatal in conclusion to them all.
First, taking in her hand the brazen key
Well-forg'd, and fitted with an iv'ry grasp,
Attended by the women of her train
She sought her inmost chamber, the recess
In which his brass, his gold, and temper'd steel 10
Ulysses kept. There hung his stubborn bow,
And there his ample quiver fill'd with shafts,
A deadly store, which Iphitus, the son
Of Eurytus, in Lacedæmon gave
Ulysses on a time, when, as it chanc'd,
He met him in Messenia, in the house
Of brave Orsilochus. Ulysses came
Demanding payment of arrearage due
From all that land; for a Messenian fleet
Had borne from Ithaca three hundred sheep, 20
With all their shepherds; long the voyage was;
Yet thither, even in his boyish days
Sent by Laertes and the senate forth,
To make the just demand, Ulysses went.
But Iphitus had thither come to seek
Twelve mares and twelve mule colts, which he had
lost,

A search that cost him soon a bloody death;
For in the house of Hercules, the bold
And indefatigable son of Jove,
Victim of lawless violence, he died. 30
The ruthless hero plac'd him at his board,
Then, negligent alike of wrath divine
And the host's duty, kill'd him; for he kept,
Himself, the mules which Iphitus had lost.
Them seeking in Messenia there he met
Ulysses, and on him that bow conferr'd,
Which erst huge Eurytus had borne, and which
Dying he left for Iphitus to bear.
Ulysses, in return, on him bestow'd
A spear and sword, ill-fated pledges both 40
Of hospitality; for ere they saw
Each other more, the son of Jove his guest
The godlike Iphitus profanely slew.
Thus came the bow into Ulysses' hands,
Which never in his gallant barks he bore
To battle (though he bent it oft at home)
But kept it in his palace safely stor'd,
A much-esteem'd memorial of his friend.
Soon as, divinest of her sex, arriv'd
At that same chamber, with her foot she press'd 50
Its oaken threshold, levell'd by the line
And shaven smooth, with shapely columns tall
At either end, on which the portals hung,
She loos'd the ring and brace, then introduc'd
The key, and aiming at them from without,
Struck back the bolts. The portals, at that stroke,
Sent forth a tone deep as the pastur'd bull's,
And flew wide open. Mounting next the broad
And elevated floor, on which the chests,
That held her own sweet-scented raiment stood, 60
With lifted hand she lower'd from its hold
The bow within its glitt'ring case secur'd.
Then, sitting there, she laid it on her knees,
Weeping aloud, and drew it from the case.
Thus weeping over it long time she sat,
Till satiate, at the last, with grief and tears,
Descending by the palace steps she sought
Again the suitors, bearing in her hand

The bow now loosen'd, and the quiver, fill'd
 With pointed arrows bright, a deadly store. 70
 Behind her also, laden with a chest,
 In which Ulysses had the rings enclos'd
 In contest us'd, some brazen, some of steel,
 Her damsels went; and when at length she came,
 Loveliest of women, where the suitors sat,
 Between the pillars of the stately dome
 Pausing, before her beauteous face she spread
 Her slender veil, and, with a female guard
 On either side, th' assembly thus address'd :

Ye bold intruders here, who never meet, 80
 But to devour the substance of a chief
 Long absent from his home, nor can invent
 Pretext or palliative for such abuse,
 Save your desire, to make a bride of me,
 Attend this game, to which I call you forth.
 Behold this pond'rous bow; my godlike spouse
 Hath bent it oft; the suitor, who shall bend
 This bow with ease, and who shall speed a shaft
 Through these twelve rings, him following, I forsake
 This mansion of my youth, so fair, so fill'd 90
 With all abundance, and which, doubtless, oft
 I shall remember even in my dreams.

So saying, she bade Eumæus lay the bow
 Before them, and the twice six rings of steel.
 He wept, receiv'd them, and obey'd; nor wept
 Philætiüs less, seeing the bow, which erst
 His lord had occupied; when, at their tears
 Indignant, thus Antinoüs exclaim'd :

Ye rural drones, whose purblind eyes see not
 Beyond the present hour, egregious fools ! 100
 Why, weeping, trouble ye the queen, distress'd
 Too much already for her husband lost?
 Rest on your seats, and silent share the feast;
 Or, going forth to weep, leave us t' assay
 This arduous task severe; for none, I judge,
 Shall bend this bow with ease, since, of us all,
 None owns Ulysses' force, whom having seen,
 While yet a child, I well remember still.

He said, but in his heart indulg'd, the while,

Fond hope, that he should bend, himself, the bow,
And pass the rings, though foremost of them all 111
Ordain'd to perish by the mortal taste
Of brave Ulysses' shaft, whom erst he dar'd
Himself to slight and teach the rest to scorn.

Amidst them then the sacred might arose
Of young Telemachus, who thus began :

Me, surely, Jove hath suddenly depriv'd
Of all sound intellect. My mother, wise
And prudent, and with cause most dear to me,
Proclaims her purpose, to forsake her home, 120
Espousing whom she must, and I, the while,
Trifle and laugh as I were still a child.

But come, ye suitors ! since the prize is such,
A princess, like to whom can none be found
This day in all Achaia ; on the shores
Of sacred Pylus, or within the walls
Of Argos, or Mycenæ, or our own,
Or in Epirus ; and since this yourselves
Know likewise, praise of mine she little needs.

Delay not, therefore, waste not time in vain 130
Excuses, turn not from the proof, but bend
At once the bow, for quick decision's sake.

I will, myself, make trial, and should I
Prevail to bend it, and to pass the rings,
Then shall I not with anguish see the queen
Following another, and forsaking me.

Whom now my years, my stature, and my strength,
Prompt forth to games, in which my sire excell'd.

He said, and starting from his seat, cast off
His purple cloak, and laid his sword aside, 140
Then fix'd, himself, the rings, a furrow first
Op'ning, of length that might suffice for all,
And scoop'd by line, then stamping close the glebe.
All wonder'd, with such skill the spikes he plac'd,
A task which never had he seen perform'd.

Then hasting to the portal, there he stood.
Thrice, with full force he strove to bend the bow,
And thrice he paus'd, but still with hope to draw
The bow-string home, and pass his arrow through.
And now the fourth time straining tight the cord, 150

He should have hitch'd it, but his father's looks
 Repress'd his eager efforts, and he ceas'd.

Then thus the royal youth again exclaim'd:

Gods ! either I shall prove of little force
 Hereafter, and for manly feats unapt,
 Or I am yet too young, and have not strength
 To quell th' aggressor's contumely. But come—
 (For ye have strength surpassing mine) try ye
 The bow, and bring this contest to an end.

He ceas'd, and on the floor set down the bow, 160
 Reclining it against the pannell'd boards
 That lin'd the wall; the light shaft next he plac'd
 Beside it, leaning on the polish'd horn,
 And to the seat, whence he had ris'n, return'd.

Then thus Eupithes' son, Antinoüs, spake:

From right to left, my friends ! as wine is giv'n,
 Come forth, and in succession try the bow.

So spake Antinoüs, and his counsel pleas'd.
 Then first Leiodes, CEnop's son, arose.

He was their soothsayer, and ever sat 170
 Beside the beaker, distant from the most,
 For he detested mischief, and his heart
 Ofttimes with anger burn'd against them all.
 He then took foremost up the shaft and bow,
 And, at the portal standing, strove to bend,
 But bent it not, fatiguing first his hands,
 Too delicate and uninur'd to toil.

He ceas'd, and his companions thus bespake:

My friends, I speed not; let another try;
 But many a prince's life this fatal bow 180
 Shall shorten, since to die far better seems
 Than to survive lost happiness, the prize
 Which here we seek, and here have sought so long.
 Some suitor, at this moment, doubtless hopes,
 That he shall wed whom long he hath desir'd,
 Ulysses' wife, Penelope; let him
 Essay the bow, and, trial made, address
 His spousal offers to some other fair
 Among the long-stol'd princesses of Greece;
 This princess leaving his whom she shall deem 190
 Most lib'ral, and whom fate shall favour most.

He ceas'd, and on the floor set down the bow,

Reclining it against the pannell'd boards
 That lin'd the wall; the light shaft, next, he plac'd,
 Beside it, leaning on the polish'd horn,
 And to the seat, whence he had ris'n, return'd.
 Then him Antinoüs, angry, thus reprov'd:

What word, Leiodes, of unpleasing sound
 Hath scap'd thy lips? it fires me with disdain.
 Shall this bow fatal prove to many a prince, 200
 Because thou hast, thyself, too feeble prov'd,
 To bend it? Thou wast neither born to bend
 The unpliant bow, nor to direct the shaft;
 But here are nobler, who shall soon prevail.

He said, and to Melanthius gave command,
 The goatherd: Hence, Melanthius, kindle fire;
 Beside it place, with fleeces spread, a form
 Of length commodious; from within procure
 A large round cake of suet next, with which
 Chafing and suppling first the rigid bow 210
 Before the fire, we will again essay
 To bend it, and decide the doubtful strife.

He ended, and Melanthius, kindling fire,
 Beside it plac'd, with fleeces spread, a form
 Of length commodious; next he brought a cake
 Ample and round of suet from within,
 With which they chaf'd the bow, then tried again
 To bend, but bent it not, too feeble far
 For that exploit. All strove, save only two,
 Antinoüs and Eurymachus; a pair, 220
 Past competition, ablest of them all.

Then went the herdsman and the swineherd
 forth.

Together; after whom the glorious chief
 Himself went forth, Ulysses; and when all
 Without the court had met, with gentle speech
 Ulysses then the faithful swains address'd:

Herdsman! and thou, Eumæus! shall I keep
 A certain secret close, or shall I speak
 Outright? I burn t' impart it, and I will.
 What welcome should Ulysses at your hands 230
 Receive, arriving sudden at his home,
 Some God his guide? would ye the suitors aid,
 Or aid Ulysses rather? answer true.

Then thus the chief intendant of his herds:
Would Jove but grant me my desire, to see
Once more the hero, and would some kind Pow'r
Restore him, I would give thee soon to know
What force I can exert in fight for him.

Eumæus also fervently the Gods
In pray'r implor'd, that they would render back 240
Ulysses to his home. He then, convinc'd
Of their unfeigning honesty, began :

Behold him ! I am he myself, arriv'd
After long suff'rings in the twentieth year !
I know how welcome to yourselves alone
Of all my train I come, for I have heard
None others praying for my safe return.
I therefore tell you truth ; should Heav'n subdue
The suitors under me, ye shall receive
Each, by my gift, a bride, with lands and house 250
Near neighb'ring mine, and thenceforth shall be, both,
Dear friends and brothers of the prince my son.
This sign shall also speak, and with a voice,
That must enforce your credence. View the scar,
Which in the thickets of Parnassus erst,
Where with my kinsmen of my mother's house
I rous'd a boar, his iv'ry tusk impress'd.

So saying, he stripp'd his tatters, and unveil'd
The whole broad scar ; then, soon as they beheld
That token, conscious of its truth, each cast 260
His arms around Ulysses, wept, embrac'd,
And press'd him to his bosom, kissing oft
His brows and shoulders, who as oft their hands
And foreheads kiss'd, nor had the setting sun
Beheld them satisfied, but that himself
Ulysses thus admonish'd them, and said :

Cease now from tears, lest any, coming forth,
Mark, and report them to the foe within,
And seek the hall again ; but one by one,
Not all at once, I foremost, then yourselves, 270
And this shall be the sign. Full well I know,
That, all unanimous, they will oppose
Surrender of the bow and shafts to me ;
But thou (proceeding with it to my seat),

Eumæus, noble friend ! shalt place it safe
 Within my grasp ; then bid the women close
 The massy doors, and should they hear a groan
 Or other noise made by the princes shut
 Within the hall, let none with curious haste
 Step forth abroad, but each her task pursue 280
 With mute attention. Be the palace-door
 Thy charge, my good Philœtius ! key it fast
 Without a moment's pause, and fix the brace.

He ended, and, returning, press'd again
 His former seat ; nor staid his servants long
 Without, but follow'd their illustrious lord.
 Eurymachus with busy fingers turn'd
 And turn'd the bow, still chafing it before
 The sprightly blaze, but, after all, could find
 No pow'r to bend it. Disappointment wrung 290
 A groan from his proud heart, and thus he said :

Alas ! not only for myself I grieve,
 But grieve for all. Nor, though I mourn the loss
 Of such a bride, mourn I that loss alone
 (For lovely Grecians may be found no few
 In Ithaca, and in the neighbour isles) ;
 But should we fall, at last, so far beneath
 The brave Ulysses, that no force of ours
 Can bend his bow, what portion then, but shame,
 Must we receive from ages yet to come ? 300

To whom Antinoüs thus, Eupithes' son :
 Eurymachus ! not so. Thou know'st the cause ;
 The feast of Phœbus ; who would, on the day
 Sacred to Phœbus, dare t' employ the bow ?
 Cease ; lay it by ; but let the rings remain
 Where now they stand, which no man, ent'ring here,
 Will venture to displace, and bid the youth
 Serve all with wine ; that, first libation made,
 We may religiously lay down the bow.
 Command ye too Melanthius, that he drive 310
 Hither the fairest goats of all his flocks
 At dawn of day ; that, burning first the thighs
 To the ethereal archer, we may make
 New trial, and decide at length the strife.

So spake Antinoüs ; and his counsel pleas'd.

The heralds then pour'd water on their hands,
While youths crown'd high the goblets, which they
bore

From right to left, with ceremonial due.
When each had made libation, and had drunk
Till well suffic'd, then, ever shrewd t' improve 320
Occasion, thus Ulysses interpos'd :

Ye suitors of the matchless queen, attend !
I speak my fervent wish, but shall entreat
Eurymachus and his illustrious friend
Antinoüs most, who counsels now so well.
Tamper no longer with the bow, but leave
The matter with the Gods, who shall decide
The strife to-morrow, fav'ring whom they will.
Mean time grant *me* the bow, that I may prove
My power to bend it ere I yet depart, 330
For trial's sake if still these hands retain
Their wonted force, or whether wand'rings long,
And loss of all that cherishes and feeds
The strength of man, have wasted mine away.

He said, whom they with indignation heard
Extreme, alarm'd lest he should bend the bow,
And sternly thus Antinoüs replied :

Ill-fated wretch, and senseless as forlorn !
Art not contented to partake the feast
With such as we? None robs thee of thy part, 340
And thou hast leave to witness, sitting here,
Our whole discourse; an honour save to thee,
To none allow'd of all the vagrant tribe.
Wine hath befool'd thee, which makes foolish all
Wide-throated drinkers, unrestrain'd by rule.
Wine in the mansion of the mighty chief
Pirithoüs made the valiant Centaur mad,
Eurytion, at the Lapithæan feast.
He drank to drunkenness, and, being drunk,
Committed great enormities beneath 350
Pirithoüs' roof, and such as fill'd with rage
The hero-guests, who therefore by his feet
Dragg'd him right through the vestibule, amerc'd
Of nose and ears, and he departed thence
Frantie for very shame ; whence soon ensu'd
Fierce war between the Centaurean race

And humankind ; but on himself he pull'd
 That evil, his excess in wine the cause.
 Great evil also, shouldst thou bend the bow,
 I prophesy to thee ; for thou shalt find 360
 Protector none or advocate in all
 This people, but we will dispatch thee hence
 Incontinent on board a sable bark
 To ruthless Echetus, that foe from whom
 No pris'ner e'er escapes. Then drink in peace,
 And quarrel shun with younger men than thou.

Him answer'd, then, Penelope discreet :
 Antinoüs ! neither seemly were the deed
 Nor just, to maim or harm whatever guest,
 Whom here arriv'd Telemachus receives. 370
 Think'st thou, that, should he bend the massy bow,
 Strong as himself Ulysses, he would claim
 The winner's prize, Ulysses' wife ? That thought
 His heart disowns ; nor let a fear so vain
 One suitor's mind distress, of all who meet
 To banquet here, since it dishonours me.

She spake ; to whom Eurymachus replied,
 Offspring of Polybus ; O matchless queen !
 Icarius' prudent daughter ! none suspects,
 That thou wilt wed with him ; a mate so mean 380
 Should ill become thee ; but we fear the tongues
 Of either sex, lest some Achaian say
 Hereafter (one inferior far to us),
 Not such the suitors are, as was the chief,
 Whose widow'd mate they seek. His bow to bend
 Surpass'd their utmost pow'r ; yet here arriv'd,
 We know not whence, a wand'rer, who perform'd
 The task with ease, and shot through all the rings.
 So will they speak, and so shall we be sham'd.

Then answer thus Penelope return'd : 390
 No fair report, Eurymachus, attends
 Their names, or can, who, riotous as ye,
 The house dishonour, and consume the wealth
 Of such a chief. Why shame ye thus *yourselves* ?
 The guest is of athletic frame, well form'd,
 And large of limb ; he boasts him also sprung
 From noble ancestry. Come then—consent—
 Give him the bow that we may see the proof ;

For thus I say, and thus will I perform;
 Sure as he bends it, and, by Phœbus' aid, 400
 Thrids all the rings, a tunic fair and cloak
 Shall be his meed from me, a jav'lin keen,
 To guard him against men and dogs, a sword
 Sharp on both sides, with sandals for his feet,
 And I will send him whither most he would.

She spake; but thus, discreet, her son replied:
 Mother—the bow is mine; and, save myself,
 None here hath right to give it, or refuse.
 No prince in rock-bound Ithaca, no chief
 Or potentate in all the fruitful isles 410
 Which neighbour Elis, if I choose to make
 The bow his own, shall negative my choice.
 Thou, therefore, seek thy chamber; there the loom
 And spindle ply thyself, and strictly charge
 Thy women, that they work; but leave to men,
 To stretch the bowstring, and my father's bow
 To me, sole ruler, in his absence, here.

He said; she, mov'd with wonder at the tone
 With which he spake, her son's advice repos'd
 Deep in her heart, and with her female train 420
 Ascending sought her chamber. There she wept
 Her lost Ulysses, till Minerva bath'd
 With balmy dews of sleep her weary lids.
 And now the noble swineherd bore the bow
 Toward Ulysses; but with one voice all
 The suitors, clamorous, reprov'd the deed,
 Of whom a youth thus insolent exclaim'd:

Thou clumsy swineherd, whither bear'st the bow,
 Delirious wretch? should Phœbus and the Gods
 Take part with us, the hounds which thou hast fed 430
 Shall eat thee yonder in thy lone abode.

So they, whom hearing he replac'd the bow
 Where erst it stood, affrighted at the sound
 Of such loud menaces; on the other side
 Telemachus as loud assail'd his ear:

Friend! forward with the bow; soon, else, repent,
 That thou obey'dst the many, driven hence
 By this my youthful arm, with massy stones,
 Back to the field. My strength surpasses thine.
 I would that all here present were in force 440

As far inferiour to myself as thou,
Soon would I, then, give rude dismissal hence
To some, who now with mischief teem alone.

He ceas'd, whose words the suitors, smiling, heard,
And, for their sake, in part their wrath resign'd
Against the prince; then through the spacious hall
Eumæus bore the bow, which he consign'd
To his lord's hand, and summoning abroad
The prudent Euryclea, thus began:

It is the pleasure of Ulysses' son, 450
Sage Euryclea! that thou key secure
The doors; and should ye hear, perchance, a groan,
Or other noise made by the princes shut
Within the hall, let none look, curious, forth,
But each in quietness her work pursue.

So he; nor useless flew his words away,
But Euryclea key'd, at once, the doors.
Then noiseless sprang Philætiſtus forth, who clos'd
As quick the portals of the palace-court.
A ship-rope of Ægyptian reed, it chanc'd, 460
Lay in the vestibule; with that he brac'd
The doors secure, and ent'ring to the guests
Resum'd his seat, but, watchful, ey'd his lord.
He now with busy look and curious touch
Explor'd the bow, now viewing it remote,
Now near at hand, aware that, haply, worms
Had, in his absence, drill'd the solid horn.
A suitor notic'd him, and thus remark'd:

He hath an eye, methinks, exactly skill'd
In bows, and steals them; or perhaps, at home, 470
Hath such himself, or feels a strong desire
To make them; mark, with what address the rogue,
Adept in mischief, shifts it to and fro!

To whom another, insolent, replied:
Such fortune crown his efforts, whatsoe'er
He purpose, as attends his effort made
On this same bow, which he shall never bend.

So they; but when the wary hero wise
Had made his hand familiar with the bow,
Poising it and examining—at once— 480
As when, in harp and song adept, a bard
Strings a new lyre, extending first the chords,

He knits them to the frame at either end,
With promptest ease! with such Ulysses strung
His own huge bow, and with his right hand trill'd
The nerve, which in its quick vibration sang
As with a swallow's voice. Then anguish turn'd
The suitors pale, and, in that moment, Jove
Gave him his rolling thunder for a sign.

Such most propitious notice from the son 490

Of wily Saturn hearing with delight,
He seiz'd a shaft, which at the table's side
Lay ready drawn; but in his quiver's womb
The rest yet slept, though destin'd soon to steep
Their points in Grecian blood. He lodg'd the reed
Full on the bowstring, drew the parted head
Home to his breast, and, aiming as he sat,
At once dismiss'd it. Through the num'rous rings
Swift flew the gliding steel, and, issuing, sped
Beyond them; when his son he thus bespake: 500

Thou need'st not blush, young prince, to have re-
ceiv'd

A guest like me; for neither swerv'd my shaft,
Nor labour'd I long time to draw the bow;
My strength is unimpair'd, not such as these
In scorn affirm it. But the waning day
Calls us to supper, after which succeeds
Jocund variety, the song, the lyre,
With all that heightens and adorns the feast.

He said, and gave him, with his brows, the sign:
At once the son of the illustrious chief 510
Slung his keen falchion, grasp'd his spear, and stood
Arm'd bright for battle at his father's side.

BOOK XXII.

Argument.

Ulysses, with some little assistance from Telemachus, Eumæus, and Philœtius, slays all the suitors; and twelve of the female servants, who had allowed themselves in illicit intercourse with them, are hanged. Melanthius also is punished with miserable mutilation.

THEN, girding up his rags, Ulysses sprang
With bow and full-charg'd quiver to the door;
Loose on the broad stone at his feet he pour'd
His arrows, and the suitors thus bespake:

This prize, though difficult, hath been achiev'd.
Now for another mark, which never man
Struck yet; but I will strike it, if I may,
And if Apollo make that glory mine.

The hero spake, and at Antinoüs aim'd
A bitter shaft; he purposing to drink, 10
Both hands advanc'd toward a golden cup
Twin-ear'd, nor aught suspected death so nigh.
For who could, at a public feast, suspect,
That one alone would dare, however bold,
Design his death, and execute the deed?
Yet him Ulysses with an arrow pierc'd
Full in the throat, and through his neck behind
Sprang forth his arrow's point. Aslant he droop'd;
Down fell the goblet, through his nostrils flew
The spouted blood, and, spurning with his foot 20
The board, he spread his viands in the dust.
At once that sight with wild disorder fill'd
The whole assembly; from the thrones they sprang,
Tumultuous, and from side to side explor'd
The palace-walls, but neither sturdy lance
Nor shield, nor buckler, now, might there be seen.
Then menacing Ulysses, thus they said:

Stranger! that arrow's flight was false; a man
 Is no just mark. Thou never shalt contend
 For prize hereafter: but shalt surely die, 30
 For thou hast slain an Ithacan, the prime
 Of all this isle, and shalt be vultures' food.

Various their judgments were, but none believ'd
 That he had slain him wittingly, nor saw
 Th' infatuate men fate hov'ring o'er them all.
 Then thus Ulysses, low'ring dark, replied:

O dogs! not fearing aught my safe return
 From Ilium, ye have shorn my substance close,
 Have forc'd my women, and have woo'd my wife,
 Myself still living, heedless of the Gods 40
 Alike, and of the just revenge of man,
 Now therefore die, now perish all as he.

He said; their cheeks all faded at the sound,
 And each with sharpen'd eyes, search'd ev'ry nook
 For an escape from his impending doom;
 Till thus, alone, Eurymachus replied:

If thou indeed art he, the mighty chief
 Of Ithaca return'd, thou hast rehears'd
 With truth the crimes committed by the Greeks
 Full oft, both in thy house and in thy field. 50
 But he, the cause of all, already slain
 Lies here, Antinoüs; he thy palace fill'd
 With outrage; not that he desir'd to wed
 Penelope, but rather much t' effect
 Far other projects, which Saturnian Jove
 Approv'd not; to possess, himself, the throne
 In Ithaca, thy son by treach'ry slain.
 But death from thy vindictive hand hath well
 Requited him; now, therefore, cease and spare
 Thy people; public reparation due 60
 Thou shalt receive; we will appease thy wrath,
 For all the waste, that, eating, drinking here,
 We have committed, rend'ring each a fine,
 Full twenty beeves, with gold and brass besides,
 Such store, that joy shall fill thee at the sight,
 However just thine anger was before.

To whom Ulysses, frowning stern, replied:
 Eurymachus, would ye contribute each

His present treasures, and, in time to come,
 His whole inheritance, not, even so, 70
 Should ye redeem the forfeit of your lives,
 Till ev'ry suitor suffer for his wrong.
 Choose therefore. Fight; or your impending
 doom

Elude in some dark refuge, if ye may,
 But all shall perish, if my thought be true.

He ended; they with trembling knees and hearts
 All heard, whom thus Eurymachus address'd :

To your defence, my friends! for respite none
 Will he to his victorious hands afford,
 But, arm'd with bow and quiver, will dispatch 80
 Shafts from the door till he have slain us all.
 Arm, therefore; draw the falchion; from behind
 The lifted tables with united force
 Assail him; drag him from his covert hold,
 The porch; and traversing from side to side
 The city, rouse the people with your cries
 In ev'ry street; that he may point the shaft
 And stretch the twisted bow-string never more.

Thus saying, he drew his brazen falchion keen
 Of double edge, and with a dreadful shout 90
 Assail'd him. But Ulysses with a shaft
 In that same moment through his bosom driv'n
 Transfix'd his liver, and down dropp'd his sword.
 Sprinkling the table from his wound, he fell
 Convolv'd in agonies, and overturn'd
 Both food and wine; his forehead smote the floor;
 Wo fill'd his heart, and spurning with his heels
 His vacant seat, he shook it till he died.
 Amphinomus, with his drawn falchion, next,
 Advanc'd to drive Ulysses from the door, 100
 And fierce was his assault; but, from behind,
 Telemachus between his shoulders fix'd
 A brazen lance, and urg'd it through his breast.
 Full on his front, with hideous sound, he fell.
 Back started then the prince (the weapon left
 Still planted in his spine) lest, had he toil'd
 To draw the long spear forth, some foe, perchance,
 Should pierce him with a shorten'd blade, or cleave

His temples with a downright edge, the while.
Swift, therefore, to his father's side he ran, 110
Whom reaching, in wing'd accents thus he said :

My father ! I will bring thee now a shield,
A helmet, and two spears ; I will enclose
Myself in armour also, and will give
Both to Philæti^{us} and Eumæus arms
Expedient now, and needful for us all.

To whom Ulysses, ever wise, replied :
Run ; fetch them while I yet have arrows left,
Lest, single, I be justled from the door.

Then to his chamber, whither he had borne 120
Those arms, ascending, from the secret store
Eight spears, four shields, four crested helms he
took,

And, laden as he was, with nimble steps
Impatient sought his father ; at whose side,
Arm'd in bright steel, and with his herdsmen clad
In arms not less resplendent, soon he stood.

Ulysses, while a shaft yet unemploy'd
Lay at his foot, right-aiming, ever pierc'd
Some suitor through, and heaps on heaps they fell.
But when his arrows fail'd the royal chief, 130

His bow reclining at the portal's side
Against the shining wall, he slung, himself,
A four-fold buckler on his arm, he fix'd
A casque, whose crest wav'd awful o'er his brows
On his illustrious head, and fill'd his gripe
With two stout spears, well headed both with brass.

There was a certain postern in the wall
At the gate's side, the customary pass
Into a narrow street, but barr'd secure.
Ulysses bade his faithful swineherd watch 140
That egress, station'd near it, for it own'd
One sole approach ; then Agelaüs loud
Exhorting all the suitors thus exclaim'd :

O friends ! may none, ascending to the door
Of yonder postern, give a loud alarm,
And teach the citizens our sore distress ?
So shall this archer soon have shot his last.

To whom the keeper of the goats replied,

Melanthius: Agelaüs! prince renown'd!
 That may not be. The postern and the gate 150
 Neighbour too near each other, and th' attempt
 To force so strait a pass would scarce prevail,
 Since one brave man might thence repulse us all.
 But come—myself will furnish you with arms
 Fetch'd from above; for there, as I suppose,
 (And not elsewhere) Ulysses and his son
 Have hidden them, and there they shall be found.

So spake Melanthius, and, ascending, sought
 Ulysses' chambers through the winding stairs
 And gall'ries of his house. Twelve shields he
 took, 160

Twelve massy spears, twelve crested helmets bright,
 And, speedily returning, dealt his charge
 Among the suitors. Trembled then the heart
 Of brave Ulysses, and his knees, at sight
 Of his opposers putting armour on,
 And shaking each his lance. Severe indeed
 Now seem'd his task, and in wing'd accents brief
 Thus to his son Telemachus he spake:

Either some woman of our train contrives
 Hard battle for us, furnishing with arms 170
 The suitors, or Melanthius arms them all.

Him answer'd then Telemachus discreet:
 Father, this fault was mine; me blame for this,
 And none besides; I left the chamber-door
 Half-clos'd, which, more attentive than myself,
 Their spy perceiv'd. But haste, Eumæus, shut
 The chamber-door, observing well, the while,
 If any woman of our train have done
 This deed, or whether, as I more suspect,
 Melanthius, Dolius' son, hath giv'n them arms. 180

Thus mutual they conferr'd; mean time again
 Melanthius to the chamber flew in quest
 Of other arms. Eumæus, as he went
 Observ'd him, and Ulysses thus address'd:

Laertes' noble son, for wiles renown'd!
 The traitor whom ourselves suspect is he,
 And seeks again the chamber! Tell me plain,
 Shall I, should I superiour prove in force,

Slay him, or shall I drag him thence to thee,
That, dying by thy sword, he may atone 190
His num'rous treasons perpetrated here?

Then answer thus Ulysses shrewd return'd :
Myself will, with Telemachus, detain
The suitors here, how fierce soe'er they prove.
Ye two, the while, bind fast Melanthius' hands
And feet behind his back, then cast him bound
Into the chamber, and (the door secur'd)
Pass underneath his arms a twisted cord ;
Then weighing him a pillar's height aloft,
And till he reach the beams, suspended leave 200
The wretch to suffer much, and still to live.

He spake ; they prompt obey'd ; together both
They sought the chamber ; he within, the while,
Their coming heard not, busied in the search
Of ev'ry nook for armour and for arms.
They, standing, watch'd the door, from which, at
length,

Forth came Melanthius, bearing in one hand
A casque, and in the other a broad shield,
Time-worn and chopp'd with drought, which in his
youth

Warlike Laertes had been wont to bear. 210
Neglected it had lain 'till wasting years
Had loos'd the suture of the loops. At once
Both, springing on him, seiz'd and drew him in
Forcibly by his locks, then cast him down
Prone on the pavement, trembling at his fate.
With painful stricture of the cord his hands
They bound and feet together at his back,
As their illustrious master had enjoin'd,
Then weigh'd him with a stronger cord aloft
By a tall pillar to the palace-roof, 220
And thus, deriding him, Eumæus spake :

Now, good Melanthius, on that fleecy bed
Reclin'd, as well befits thee, thou wilt watch
All night, nor when the golden dawn forsakes
The streams of oceans will she scape thine eye,
But thou wilt duly to the palace drive
The fattest goats, a banquet for thy friends.

So saying, he left him in his dreadful sling.
 Then, arming both, and barring fast the door,
 They sought brave Laertiades again. 230
 Undaunted there they stood; four, at the gate,
 Oppos'd to many valiant youths within;
 When Pallas, in the form and with the voice
 Of Mentor, to Laertes' son approach'd,
 Who saw, and, seeing her, with joy exclaim'd:

O Mentor! save me. Now befriend thy friend—
 (Such, many a year) and playmate, when a child.

So he, not unsuspicious that he saw
 Pallas, the heroine of Heav'n. Mean time
 The suitors fill'd with menaces the dome, 240
 And Agelaüs first, Damastor's son,
 In accents harsh the Goddess thus rebuk'd:

Beware, O Mentor! that he lure thee not
 T' oppose the suitors in his desp'rate cause,
 For thus will we. The father and his son
 Both slain, in vengeance of thy purpos'd deeds
 Against us, we will slay *thee* next, and thou
 With thy own head shalt satisfy the wrong.
 Your force thus quell'd in battle, all thy wealth
 In house and field, confounding it with his, 250
 We will confiscate; we will banish hence
 Thy sons and daughters, and thy virtuous spouse
 Shall leave this city, never to return.

He ended, and his words with wrath inflam'd
 Minerva's heart the more; incens'd she turn'd
 Toward Ulysses, whom she thus reprov'd:

Thou neither own'st the courage nor the force,
 Ulysses, now, which, in the field of Troy,
 For high-born Helen's sake, thou didst exert
 Through nine whole years; there, multitudes by
 thee 260
 Fell slain in furious battle, and, at length,
 Thy counsels laid the tow'rs of Priam low.
 Why, in possession of thy proper home
 And substance, mourn'st thou want of pow'r t' oppose
 The suitors? Stand beside me, mark my deeds,
 And Mentor son of Alcimus confess
 Thy valiant friend, and mindful of thy love.

She spake; but still designing proof severe
Of each, the father and his glorious son,
Not yet made vict'ry theirs. A swallow's form 270
Assuming, on a golden beam aloft
She perch'd, and sat spectatress of the fight.

Then Demoptolemus; Polycetor's son,
Pisander; Polybus; the haughty prince
Eurynomus; Amphinomus, and old
Damastor's offspring, Agelaüs, rous'd
The rest to battle, for illustrious most
Of all the suitor train, who now surviv'd,
And fought for life, were these. The bow, with
shafts

In quick succession sent, had quell'd the rest, 280
And Agelaüs thus exhorted all:

We soon shall tame, O friends, this warrior's might,
Whom Mentor, after all his airy vaunts
Hath left, and at the portal now remain
Themselves alone. Dismiss not therefore all
Your spears together, but with six alone
Assail them first; Jove willing, we shall pierce
Ulysses, and subduing him, shall slay
With ease the rest; their force is safely scorn'd.

He ceas'd; and, as he bade, six hurl'd the spear 290
Together; but Minerva gave them all
A devious flight; one struck a column, one
The planks of the broad portal, and a third
Flung right his ashen beam against the wall.
Their weapons thus all hurl'd in vain, the brave
Ulysses his companions thus advis'd:

Hear now, my friends! my counsel. Hurl the
spear
At once with indiscriminating aim
Against them all; since now they seek to crown
Their other crimes with slaughter of ourselves. 300

He spake, nor they delay'd, but instant hurl'd
Their glitt'ring spears. Ulysses on the ground
Stretch'd Demoptolemus; Ulysses' son,
Euryades; Eumæus, at his side
Elatus, and the keeper of the beeves
Pisander; in one moment all alike
Lay grinding with their teeth the dusty floor.

Back flew the suitors to the farthest wall,
On whom those valiant four advancing, each
Recover'd, quick, his weapon from the dead, 310
Then hurl'd the desp'rate suitors yet again
Their glitt'ring spears, but Pallas gave to each
A frustrate course; one struck a column, one
The planks of the broad portal, and a third
Flung full his ashen beam against the wall.
Yet pierc'd Amphimedon the prince's wrist,
But with a surface-wound, and o'er his shield
Ctesippus with his spear the shoulder reach'd
Of good Eumæus; but the weapon glanc'd,
O'erflew the mark, and fell. And now the four, 320
Ulysses, dauntless hero, and his friends,
All hurl'd their spears together in return.
Ulysses, leveller of lofty tow'rs,
Transpierc'd Eurydamas; Ulysses' son,
Amphimedon; the swineherd, Polybus;
And through his breast the keeper of the beeves
Ctesippus; glorying over whom, he cried:

O son of Polythereses! skill'd in arts
Of mock'ry and derision, never more
Boast foolishly, but to the Gods commit 330
Thy tongue, since they are mightier far than thou,
Take this—a gift to recompense thy gift
And pledge of future amity, the hoof,
Which while he roam'd the palace, begging alms,
Ulysses at thy bounteous hand receiv'd.

So spake Philætiús. Then, spear in hand,
Ulysses pierc'd Damastor's son, and next
Telemachus his lance's glitt'ring head
Drove through the bowels of Evenor's son,
Leiocritus; he prostrate smote the floor. 340
Then Pallas from the lofty roof held forth
Her host-confounding Ægis o'er their heads,
With'ring their souls with fear. They scatter'd fled
As heifers flee, which, borne on nimble wing,
The gadfly dissipates, infester fell
Of grazing herds, when vernal heats prevail.
But these, as falcons from the mountains stoop,
Arm'd with strong talons and with crooked beaks,
On smaller fowls affrighted by the toils;

At once they strike the quarry; force alike 350
 And refuge fail them; smitten to the ground
 In heaps they fall, the fowlers seize the prey—
 So these, pursuing through the spacious hall
 The suitors, smote them on all sides; their heads
 Sounded beneath the sword; with hideous groans
 The palace rang; the pavement foam'd with blood.
 Then flew Leiodes to Ulysses' knees,
 Which clasping, in wing'd accents thus he cried.

I clasp thy knees, Ulysses! oh respect
 My suit, and spare me! Never have I sinn'd 360
 Against thy women or in word or deed,
 But others sinning in that sort have oft
 Forbidden, who, persisting in despight
 Of my reproof, have reach'd a shameful end.
 But my sole crime hath been, that as a seer
 I serv'd the suitors; an offence, for which
 Ordaining me to die, thou shalt but prove
 That pious men and just are such in vain.

To whom Ulysses with a frown replied:
 Is that thy sole offence, that thou hast serv'd 370
 The suitors as a seer? Their seer, methinks,
 Must oft have pray'd, that I might never taste
 Domestic sweets again, and with a zeal
 Peculiar, that my consort, made his own,
 Might bear him children. Refuge, therefore, none
 For thee remains, but thou shalt also die.

So saying, he caught the falchion from the floor
 Which Agelaüs had let fall, and smote
 Leiodes, while he kneel'd, athwart his neck
 So suddenly, that ere his tongue had ceas'd 380
 To plead for life, his head was in the dust.
 But Phemius, son of Terpius, bard divine,
 Who, through compulsion, with his song regal'd
 The suitors, a like dreadful death escap'd.
 Fast by the postern, harp in hand, he stood,
 Doubtful if, issuing, he should take his seat
 Beside the altar of Hercæan Jove,
 Where oft Ulysses offer'd, and his sire,
 Fat thighs of beeves, or whether he should haste,
 T' embrace his knees, a suppliant for his life. 390

That course, at length, most pleas'd him; then between

The beaker and an argent-studded throne
He ground his sweet lyre, and seizing fast
The hero's knees, him suppliant thus address'd :

I clasp thy knees, Ulysses ! oh respect
My suit, and spare me. Thou shalt not escape
Regret thyself hereafter, if thou slay
Me, charmer of the woes of Gods and men.
Self-taught am I, and treasure in my mind
Songs of all argument from Heav'n inspir'd, 400
And thou hast heard me chanting to the lyre
Thy glorious deeds, as I had prais'd a God.
Spare, then, this ancient head ; since not by choice
(As thy dear son will tell thee), nor to share
The banquet, have I serv'd as minstrel here,
But aw'd by numbers, and by force constrain'd.

So he ; whom hearing as he stood beside
His sire, Telemachus thus interpos'd :

Hold—Harm not with the vengeful falchion's edge
This blameless man ; and we will also spare 410
Medon the herald, who hath ever been
A watchful guardian of my boyish years.
Unless Philœtius or Eumæus him
Have mingled with the rest, or thou, perchance,
Unconscious, in the tumult of the fight.

He spake ; whom Medon hearing (for he lay
Beneath a throne, and in a new stripp'd hide
Enfolded, trembling with the dread of death)
Sprang from his covert, cast away the skin,
And, flying to Telemachus, whose knees 420
He close embrac'd, thus eager su'd to live :

Prince ! I am here—oh, pity me ! repress
Thine own, and pacify thy father's wrath.
That he destroy not me, through fierce revenge
Of their iniquities, who have consum'd
His wealth, and, in their folly, scorn'd his son.

To whom, Ulysses, ever-wise, replied,
Smiling complacent : Fear thou not ; my son
Hath pleaded for thee. Therefore (taught thyself
That truth) teach others the superiour worth 430

Of honest with dishonest deeds compar'd;
But go ye forth, thou and the sacred bard,
That ye may sit withdrawn in yonder court
From all this carnage, while I give command,
Myself, concerning it, to those within.

He ceas'd; they, going forth, took each his seat
Beside Jove's altar, but with heedful looks
Suspicious, dreading without cease the sword.
Mean time Ulysses search'd his hall, in quest
Of living foes, if any still surviv'd 440
Unpunish'd; but he found them all alike
Welt'ring in dust and blood; num'rous they lay
Like fishes when they strew the sinuous shore
Of Ocean, from the gray gulf drawn aground
In nets of many a mesh; athirst to suck
The briny wave they strew the sands, till hot
The gazing sun dries all their life away;
So lay the suitors heap'd, and thus at length
The prudent chief gave order to his son:

Telemachus! bid Euryclea come 450
Quickly, the nurse, to whom I would impart
Such order as now seems expedient most.

He said; obedient to his sire, the prince
Smote on the door, and summon'd loud the nurse:

Guardian of all our women, ancient dame!
Come forth—my father calls thee; learn his will.

So he; nor useless flew his words away;
For, throwing wide the portal, forth she came,
And, by Telemachus conducted, found
Erelong Ulysses amid all the slain, 460

With blood defil'd and dust, nor dreadful less
In aspect than the lion, when he leaves
An ox well-nigh devour'd; his cheeks distain'd
And all his ample chest, from side to side,
With gore, bespeak him newly from the prey,
Tremedous spectacle! such seem'd the chief,
Blood-stain'd all over. She, the carnage spread
On all sides seeing, and the pools of blood,
Scarce less than shouted, such a work she saw
Past all her hopes achiev'd, but he repress'd 470
The struggling rapture, ere it burst abroad,
And in wing'd accents thus his will enforc'd:

Silent exult, O ancient matron dear!
 Shout not, be still. Unholy is the voice
 Of loud thanksgiving over slaughter'd men.
 These, self-subdu'd by guilt and by the Gods,
 Have perish'd thus; for whether noble guest
 Arriv'd or base, they scoff'd at all alike,
 And for their wickedness have, therefore, died.
 But these my women—teach me to discern 480
 And judge between the guiltless and the rest.

To whom good Euryclea thus replied:
 My son! I will declare the truth; thou keep'st
 Female domestics fifty in thy house,
 Whom we have made intelligent to comb
 The fleece, and to perform whatever task.
 Of these, twice six have overpass'd the bounds
 Of modesty, respecting neither me,
 Nor yet the queen, who would not that thy son,
 Adult so lately, should assume the charge, 490
 To regulate the women of her train.
 But I am gone, I fly with what hath pass'd
 To the queen's ear, who nought suspects, so sound
 She sleeps, by some divinity compos'd.

Then answer, thus, Ulysses wise return'd:
 Hush, and disturb her not. Go. Summon first
 Those wantons, who have long deserv'd to die.

He ceas'd; forth flew the matron at his word,
 To call those women thither; and, the while,
 His herdsmen and his son he thus bespake: 500

The women come; command them to your aid,
 While ye remove the slain, and while ye cleanse
 With well-soak'd sponges the resplendent seats
 And tables. This confusion thus reduc'd
 To decent order, lead the women forth
 Into the court, and in the narrow pass
 'Twixt wall and scull'ry, with the falchion's edge
 Smite them, till each, expiring, shall forget
 Her darling suitor, and his stol'n embrace.

He ended, and the damsels came at once 510
 All forth, lamenting, and with tepid tears
 Show'ring the ground; with mutual labour first
 Bearing the bodies forth into the court,
 They lodg'd them in the portico; mean time

Ulysses, with a master's awful tone
 Enjoin'd them haste, whom they perforce obey'd.
 With sponges and with water next they cleans'd
 The thrones and tables, while the busy prince,
 Eumæus, and Philætiſ purg'd the floor,
 And those twelve damsels carried forth the soil. 520
 Thus all erelong adjusted, leading forth
 The women next, they shut them close between
 The lofty wall and scull'ry, narrow strait
 And dreadful, whence no pris'ner, might escape.
 Then, prudent, thus Telemachus advis'd :

The death of honour would I never grant
 To criminals like these, who pour'd contempt
 On mine and on my mother's head, and lay
 By night enfolded in the suitors' arms.

He said, and noosing a strong galley-rope 530
 To a huge column, led the cord around
 The spacious dome, suspended so aloft,
 That none with quiv'ring feet might reach the floor.
 As when a flight of doves ent'ring the copse,
 Or broad-wing'd thrushes, strike against the net
 Within, ill rest, entangled, there they find,
 So they, suspended by the neck, expir'd
 All in one line together. Death abhorr'd !
 With restless feet awhile they beat the air,
 Then ceas'd. And now through vestibule and hall 540
 They led Melanthius forth. With ruthless steel
 They par'd away his ears and nose, pluck'd forth
 His parts of shame, devoted to the dogs,
 And, still indignant, lopp'd his hands and feet.
 Thus all their work accomplish'd, each perform'd
 Needful ablution first, then join'd again
 Ulysses, who the matron thus bespake :

Bring blast-averting sulphur, nurse, bring fire !
 That I may fumigate my walls ; then bid
 Penelope with her attendants down, 550
 Nor leave unsummon'd one of all the train.

But Euryclea thus, his nurse, replied :
 My son ! thou hast well said ; yet will I first
 Serve thee with vest and mantle ; for t' appear
 In tatters clad, but ill beseems thee now.

Then answer thus Ulysses wise return'd :

Not so. Bring fire for fumigation first.

He said ; nor Euryclea, twice enjoin'd,
Longer delay'd, but sulphur brought and fire;
When he with purifying steams, himself, 560
Visited ev'ry part, the spacious hall,
The vestibule, the court. Mean time the nurse
From side to side of all the palace call'd
The women forth t' attend their lord in haste,
And they attended, bearing each a torch.
Assembling fast around him, his return
They gratulated; each his forehead kiss'd,
And shoulders, and his hands lock'd fast in hers.
He, recognizing all, resistless felt
The gushing tide of mingled grief and joy. 570

BOOK XXIII.

Argument.

Ulysses, with some difficulty, convinces Penelope of his identity, who, at length, overcome by force of evidence, receives him to her arms with transport. He entertains her with a recital of his adventures, and in his narration the principal events of the poem are recapitulated. In the morning, Ulysses, Telemachus, the herdsman, and the swineherd, depart into the country.

AND now, with exultation wing'd, the nurse
Ascending sought the chamber of the queen,
T' apprise her of Ulysses then below.
Joy brac'd her knees, with nimbleness of youth
She stepp'd, and at her ear her thus bespake :

Arise, Penelope ! dear daughter, see
With thy own eyes thy daily wish fulfill'd,
Ulysses is arriv'd ; hath reach'd at last
His native home, and all those suitors proud
Hath slain, who fill'd his household with distress, 10
His substance wasted, and controll'd his son.

To whom Penelope discreet replied :
Dear nurse ! the Gods have surely ta'en away
Thy judgment ; they transform the wise to fools,
And fools conduct to wisdom, and have made
Thee frantic, whom they made discreet before.
Why wilt thou mock me (conscious of my woes)
With these extravagancies ? Why disturb
Those slumbers sweet, that seal'd so fast mine eyes ?
For such sweet slumbers have I never known, 20
Since my Ulysses on his voyage sail'd
To that bad city never to be nam'd.
Down instant to thy place again—begone—
For had another of my maidens dar'd

Disturb my sleep with tidings wild as these,
 I had dismiss'd her down into the house
 More roughly; but thine age excuses *thee*.

To whom the venerable matron thus:
 I mock thee not, my daughter!—He is come—
 Himself, Ulysses, even as I say, 30
 That stranger, object of the scorn of all.
 Telemachus hath known him from the first,
 But prudently was mute, t' insure the more
 The punishment of those intruders here.

So Euryclea; she transported heard,
 And, springing from the bed, wrapp'd in her arms
 The ancient woman, shedding tears of joy,
 And in wing'd accents ardent thus replied:

Ah then, dear nurse, inform me! tell me true!
 Hath he indeed arriv'd as thou declar'st? 40
 How could he slay those shameless ones alone?
 For never were they fewer here than all.

Then Euryclea thus: matron belov'd,
 I nothing saw or knew; but only heard
 Groans of the wounded; in th' interior house
 We trembling sat, and ev'ry door was fast.
 Thus all remain'd, 'till, from his father sent,
 The young prince call'd me forth. I, going, found
 Ulysses compass'd by the slaughter'd dead.
 They cover'd wide the pavement, heaps on heaps. 50
 It would have cheer'd thy heart to have beheld
 Thy husband lionlike with crimson stains
 Of slaughter and of dust all dappled o'er.
 Heap'd in the portal, at this moment, lie
 Their bodies, and he fumigates, mean time,
 The house with sulphur and with flames of fire,
 And hath, himself, sent me to bid thee down.
 Follow me, then, that ye may give your hearts
 To gladness, both, for ye have much endur'd;
 Behold th' event, so long your soul's desire, 60
 Fulfill'd: in presence of his household Gods
 Alive he stands; Telemachus and thee
 Finds still at home; nor hath one suitor scap'd,
 Of all that impious throng, his just revenge.

Her answer'd, then, Penelope discreet:
 Ah dearest nurse! indulge not in excess

This dang'rous triumph ; all, as well thou know'st,
 Would deem him welcome here, and more than all
 Myself, and, offspring of our wedded love,
 Telemachus. But these things are not so ; 70
 Some God, resentful of their evil deeds,
 And of their biting contumely severe,
 Hath them destroy'd ; for whether noble guest
 Arriv'd or base, alike they scoff'd at all,
 And for their wickedness have therefore died.
 But my Ulysses distant far, I know,
 From Greece hath perish'd, and returns no more.

To whom thus Euryclea, nurse belov'd ;
 What word, my daughter, hath escap'd thy lips,
 Who thus affirm'st Ulysses, now within 80
 And at his own hearth's side, for ever lost ?
 Canst thou be thus incredulous ? Hear again—
 I give thee now proof past dispute, his scar
 Imprinted by the wild boar's iv'ry tusk,
 Laving him I remark'd it, and desir'd,
 Myself, to tell thee ; but my wary lord,
 Compressing with both hands my lips, forbade.
 Come follow me. My life shall be the pledge.
 If I deceive thee, let the bitt'rest death,
 That vengeance can devise, requite the fraud. 90

To whom Penelope, discreet, replied :
 Ah, dearest nurse, thou little know'st to search,
 With all thy much sagacity, the plans
 And counsels of the Gods. But let me hence
 Down to my son. I will, at least, behold
 The suitors dead, and him by whom they died.

So saying, she left her chamber, musing much
 In her descent, if first she should demand
 Proof, that the conqu'ror was indeed, himself,
 Her lov'd Ulysses, or should fly t' imprint 100
 At once his hands with kisses and his brows.
 O'erpassing light the portal-step of stone
 She enter'd. He sat opposite, illum'd
 By the hearth's sprightly blaze, and close before
 A pillar of the dome, with downcast eyes
 Expecting what his noble spouse would say,
 Seeing him there ; but she sat silent long,
 Her faculties in mute amazement held.

By turns she rivetted her eyes on his,
 And seeing him so foul attir'd, by turns 110
 She recognized him not; at length, displeas'd,
 Telemachus her silence thus reprov'd:

My mother! ah my hapless and my most
 Obdurate mother! wherefore thus aloof
 Shunn'st thou my father, with suspicious looks
 Surveying him, with whom thou shouldst exchange
 Sweet converse now, close seated at his side?
 Another wife lives not, who could endure
 Such distance from her husband new-return'd
 To his own country in the twentieth year, 120
 After much hardship; but thy firmer heart
 Than stone itself retains its temper still.

To whom Penelope, discreet, replied:
 I am all wonder, O my son; my soul
 Is stunn'd within me; pow'r to speak to him,
 Or to interrogate him, have I none,
 Or ev'n to look on him; but if indeed
 He be Ulysses, and have reach'd his home,
 I shall believe it soon, by proof convinc'd
 Of signs, known only to himself and me. 130

She said; then smil'd the hero toil-inur'd,
 And in wing'd accents thus his son enjoin'd:

Leave thou, Telemachus, thy mother here,
 To sift and prove me; she will know me soon
 More surely; seeing me thus ill attir'd
 And squalid, for that cause she scorns me now,
 And no belief hath yet, that I am he.
 But we have need, thou and myself, of deep
 Deliberation. If a man has slain
 One only citizen, who leaves behind 140
 Few friends solicitous t' avenge his death,
 Yet, flying, he forsakes both friends and home;
 But we the flow'r and strength of all our isle
 Have slain—think then, what course must we pursue?

Him, prudent, then answer'd Telemachus:
 But that thy care, my father! for report
 Proclaims *thee* wisest of mankind, with whom
 In ingenuity may none compare.
 Lead thou, secure to find in us alert
 And ardent followers; and though pow'r, perchance,

May fail us, courage shall not to the last. 151

Thus then replied Ulysses, ever-wise :
To me the safest counsel and the best
Seems this. First use the bath ; then, putting on
Your tunics, bid ye next the maidens take
Their best attire, and let the bard divine
Strike on his tuneful chords a sprightly dance,
That, whether passenger or neighbour hear,
All may suppose glad nuptials held within.
So shall not loud report, that we have slain 160
All those, alarm the city, till we gain
Our woods and fields, where, once arriv'd, such plans
We will devise, as Jove shall deign t' inspire.

He spake, and all, obedient, in the bath
First lav'd themselves, then put their tunics on ;
The damsels also dress'd, and the sweet bard,
Harping melodiously, desires in each
Excited of sweet song and graceful dance.
The palace under all its vaulted roof
Remurmur'd to the feet of sportive youths 170
And cinctur'd maidens, while no few abroad,
Hearing such revelry within, remark'd—

The queen with many wooers weds at last.
Ah fickle and unworthy fair ! too frail
Always to keep inviolate the house
Of her first lord, and wait for his return.

So spake the people ; but they little knew
What had befall'n. Eurynome, mean time,
With bath and unction serv'd th' illustrious chief,
Ulysses, and with mantle and with vest 180
In his own house attir'd him once again.
Then Pallas over all his features shed
Superiour beauty, dignified his form
With added amplitude, and pour'd his curls
Like hyacinthine garlands from his brows.
As when, by Vulcan and Minerva taught,
Some artist, finishing a graceful work,
Entwines bright silver with a wreath of gold,
Such grace the Goddess o'er his ample chest
Copious diffus'd, and o'er his manly brows. 190
He, godlike, stepping from the bath, resum'd
His former seat magnificent, and sat

Before Penelope, to whom he said :

Princess ! the Pow'rs Olympian never made
A female heart insensible as thine.
Another wife breaths not, who could endure
Such distance from her husband new-return'd
To his own country in the twentieth year,
After such hardship. Nurse ! prepare a couch
For my repose ; her adamantine heart
Yields not, and I must pass the night alone. 200

Him answer'd then prudent Penelope :
My temper, sir ! inclines not me t' extol
Or to depreciate much, or much admire ;
Full well I recollect thee as thou wast
When thou did sail from Ithaca—Go, nurse,
Prepare his bed ; yet not within the walls
Of his own nuptial chamber, which he built
With his own hands, but, placing it without,
There make it thick with fleecy skins beneath 210
And with warm cloaks and splendid rugs above.

So spake she, proving him, and, not untouch'd
With anger at that word, he thus replied :

Thy cruel charge with anguish fills my soul.
Who then hath mov'd my bed ? The task were hard
E'en to an artist ; other than a God
None might with ease displace it ; man alone,
Though vigorous and in his prime of youth,
Could never. In that bed consists a sign ;
For these hands fashion'd it, and none beside. 220
Within my court, luxuriant, leafy, tall,
And of columnal size, an olive grew.
Around this tree with stones cemented close
I built my nuptial chamber, roof'd it o'er,
And hung the glutinated portals on.
Then, lopping from the sides its ample boughs
And sev'ring near the root its solid bole,
I smooth'd the rugged stump, till it became
A pedestal, and, squaring it by line,
Form'd next the shapely pillar. Last I drill'd 230
The frame on either side ; and thus my work
Beginning from the stump, beneath, ceas'd not
Till all was finish'd, in all parts adorn'd
With ivory, with silver, and with gold,

And interlac'd with purple thongs below.
Such sign I give thee. But if still my bed
Unmov'd remain, or, sever'd from its base
By violence of other hands, have found
A new position, is best known to thee.

He ceas'd; Penelope with flutt'ring heart 240
And falt'ring knees, and eyes that stream'd for joy,
Confess'd the proof, sprang to him, threw her arms
Around him, kiss'd his forehead, and replied:

Ulysses! wisest at all other times
Of humankind, ah! be not angry now,
Nor frown on me! The Gods themselves ordain'd
Our ceaseless suff'rings; envied us the bliss
Of undivided union sweet enjoy'd
Through life, from early youth to latest age.

No. Be not angry now; forgive the fault, 250
That I embrac'd thee not as soon as seen;

For never hath my spirit lost the dread,
Lest some deceitful alien should, perchance,
Beguile me, for our house draws num'rous such.

Jove's daughter, Argive Helen, ne'er had giv'n
Free entertainment to a stranger's love,
Had she foreknown, that, by the warlike sons
Of Greece regain'd, she should at length return.

But Heav'n incited her to that offence,
Else had she never in her heart conceiv'd 260

A crime, which, perpetrated, prov'd the source
Of all Achaia's woes, and of our own.

But since thus punctually thou hast describ'd
Our bed, which never mortal yet beheld,

Ourselves except and Actoris my maid,
Giv'n me, what time I left my native home,

By good Icarius, and who kept the door,
Though hard to be convinc'd, at last I yield.

So saying, with fresh sympathy she touch'd
His inmost soul, and folding in his arms 270

His sweet and most unblemish'd spouse, he wept.
Welcome as land appears to those who swim,

Whose gallant bark, by winds and rolling waves
Assail'd, hath perish'd in the boundless sea,

A mariner or two, perchance, escape
The foamy flood, and swimming, reach the land,

Weary indeed, and with incrusted brine
 All rough, but O, how glad to climb the coast !
 So welcome in her eyes Ulysses seem'd,
 Around whose neck winding her snowy arms, 280
 She clung as she would lose him never more.
 Thus had they wept till rosy-finger'd morn
 Had found them weeping, but Minerva check'd
 Night's almost finish'd course, and held mean time,
 The golden Dawn close pris'ner in the Deep,
 Forbidding her to lead her coursers forth,
 Lampus and Phaëthon, that furnish light
 For all mankind, and join them to the yoke.
 Then thus Laertes' son his spouse address'd :

My love; not yet we have attain'd the close 290
 Of all our suff'rings, but unmeasur'd toil
 Arduous remains, which I must still achieve.
 For so the spirit of the Theban seer
 Taught me, what time solicitous t' inquire
 Of mine and of my people's safe return
 I journey'd down to Pluto's drear abode.
 But let us hence to bed, once more t' enjoy
 Tranquil repose. My love, make no delay.

Him answer'd then Prudent Penelope :
 Thou shalt to bed, what time soe'er thou wilt, 300
 Since, by the Gods conducted, thou hast reach'd
 Thy mansion, and thy native shores again.
 But since, by sage Tiresias taught, thou know'st
 That thou hast labours still t' achieve, declare
 What labours? I shall learn them, as I judge,
 Hereafter, why shouldst thou conceal them now?

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied :
 Ah conversant with wo ! why wouldst thou learn
 That tale? but I will tell it thee at large.
 Thou wilt not hear with joy, nor shall myself 310
 With joy rehearse it; for he bade me seek
 City after city, bearing, as I go,
 A shapely oar, till I shall find, at length,
 A people who the sea know not, nor eat
 Food salted; they trim galley crimson-prow'd
 Have ne'er beheld, nor yet smooth-shaven oar,
 With which the vessel wing'd scuds o'er the waves.
 He gave me also this authentic sign,

Which I will tell thee. In what place soe'er
 I chance to meet a trav'ller, who shall name 320
 The oar, on my broad shoulder borne, a van;
 He bade me, planting it on that same spot,
 Worship the King of Ocean with a bull,
 A ram, and a lascivious boar, then seek
 My home again, and sacrifice at home
 A hecatomb in honour of the Gods,
 Deathless possessors of th' expanse above.
 So shall I die, at length, the gentlest death
 Remote from Ocean; it shall find me late,
 In soft serenity of age, the chief 330
 Of a blest people.—These events, the seer
 Tiresias said, should surely come to pass.

Him answer'd then Penelope discreet:
 If Heav'n ordain thee to a calm old age,
 Hope lives, that all our woes shall have an end.

Such was their mutual conf'rence sweet; mean time
 Eurynome and Euryclea dress'd
 Their bed by light of the clear torch, and when
 Dispatchful they had spread it broad and deep,
 The ancient nurse retiring sought her own. 340
 Then came Eurynome, to whom in trust
 The chambers appertain'd, and with a torch
 Conducted them to rest; she introduc'd
 The happy pair, and went; transported they
 To rites connubial, intermitted long,
 And now recover'd, gave themselves again.
 Mean time, the prince, the herdsmen, and the good
 Eumæus, to their feet affording rest,
 Ceas'd from the dance; they made the women cease
 Also, and to their sev'ral chambers all 350
 Beneath the dark high-vaulted roof retir'd.

At length, with conjugal endearment both
 Sate, Ulysses tasted and his spouse
 The sweets of mutal converse. She rehears'd,
 Noblest of women, all her num'rous woes
 Beneath that roof sustain'd, while she beheld
 The profligacy of the suitor-throng,
 Who in their wooing had consum'd his herds
 And fatted flocks, and drawn his vessels dry;
 While brave Ulysses, in his turn, rehears'd 360

Whate'er his foes had suffer'd at his hands,
And what himself at theirs; he told her all;
She listen'd charm'd, nor sleep once seal'd her eyes,
While aught of all his toils untold remain'd.
First he recited his success in arms
Against the Cicons, and his safe escape
From the Lotophagi with all his crews.
The Cyclops' deeds, he told her next, and how
He well aveng'd on him his noble friends,
Whom, pitiless, the monster had devour'd. 370
How to the isle of Æolus he came,
Who welcom'd him and safe dismiss'd him thence,
Although not destin'd to regain so soon
His native land; for o'er the fishy deep
Loud tempests snatch'd him sighing back again.
How also to Telepylus he sail'd,
Town of the Læstrygonians, who destroy'd,
His own except, his ships with all his friends.
Of guileful Circe too he spake, deep-skill'd
In various artifice, and how he reach'd 380
With sails and oars the squalid realms of death,
Desirous to consult the prophet there,
Theban Tiresias; and how there he view'd
All his companions, and the mother bland,
Who bare and nurs'd him in his infant years.
How next he heard the Sirens in one strain
All chiming sweet, and how he reach'd the rocks
Erratic, Scylla and Charybdis dire,
Which none secure from injury may pass.
Then, how the partners of his voyage slew 390
The Sun's own beeves, and how the Thund'rer Jove
Hurl'd down his smoky bolts into his bark,
Depriving him at once of all his crew,
Whose dreadful fate he yet, himself, surviv'd.
How to Ogygia's isle he came, where dwelt
The nymph Calypso, who, enamour'd, wish'd
T' espouse him, and within her ample cave
Detain'd and fed, and promis'd him a life
Exempt for ever from the sap of age,
But him sway'd not; nor fail'd he to relate 400
How, sore distress'd, he reach'd Pæacia's coast,
Where all alike rever'd him as a God,

And whence, enriching him with brass and gold
And costly raiment first, they sent him home.
At this last word, oblivious slumber sweet
Fell on him, dissipating all his cares.

Mean time, Minerva, Goddess azure-ey'd,
On other thoughts intent, soon as she deem'd
Ulysses with connubial joys suffic'd,
And with sweet sleep, at once from Ocean rous'd 410
The golden-axled chariot of the morn,
T' illumine Earth; when from his fleecy couch
The hero sprang, and thus his spouse enjoin'd :

O consort dear! enough we both have giv'n
To sorrow, thou, with never-ceasing tears
My tedious absence mourning, and myself
Not mourning less for that the Pow'ers of Heav'n
So long withheld me from my native shores.
But, since in this dear nuptial bed we meet
Once more, keep thou my stores uninjur'd here, 420
And soon will I replace my flocks destroy'd
By those imperious suitors, and the Greeks
Shall add yet others till my folds be fill'd.
But to the woodlands go I now—to see
My noble father, who for my sake mourns
Continual; as for thee, my love, although
I know thee wise, I give thee thus in charge :
The sun no sooner shall ascend, than all
Will learn, that I have slain the suitors here,
Thou, therefore, with thy female train abide 430
Sequester'd in thy close recess above,
Nor question ask, nor, curious, look abroad.

He said, and, putting on bright armour, call'd
Telemachus, Philætiüs, and his friend
Eumæus, bidding each his arms resume ;
Nor they complied not, but, resuming each
His armour, op'd the gates and issu'd forth,
Ulysses at their head. Day's earliest dawn
Now streak'd the skies, but Pallas them, involv'd
In darkness still, led soon into the fields. 440

BOOK XXIV.

Argument.

Mercury conducts the souls of the suitors down to Aides.
Ulysses discovers himself to Laertes, and, quells, by the aid of Minerva, an insurrection of the people resenting the death of the suitors.

CYLLENIAN Hermes now call'd forth the souls
Of all the suitors; with his golden wand,
Of pow'r to seal in balmy sleep whose eyes
Soe'er he will, and open them again,
He led them gibb'ring down into the shades.
As in some hollow rock, the cluster'd bats,
Drawn from the chink by force in which they slept,
Take wing and, squeaking, flutter all around,
So, after bounteous Mercury, the ghosts
Troop'd downward gibb'ring all the dreary way. 10
The streams of Ocean, the Leucadian rock,
The Sun's pale postern, and the land of Dreams
Passing, they came at once into the meads
Of Asphodel, by shadowy forms possess'd
Of mortal men deceas'd. They found the souls
Of brave Pelides there, and of his friend
Patroclus, of Antilochus renown'd,
And of the mightier Ajax, for his form
And for his bulk of all Achaia's sons
(Achilles sole except), the most admir'd. 20
These waited on Achilles. Then appear'd
The mournful ghost of Agamemnon, son
Of Atreus, compass'd by the ghosts of all,
Who shar'd his fate beneath Ægysthus' roof,
And him the ghost of Peleus' son bespake:
Atrides! of all heroes thee we deem'd
Most favour'd by the Gods, for that thy sway

Extended over such a glorious host
 At Ilium, scene of sorrow to the Greeks.
 Death conquers all who live, and from the birth 30
 Thyself wast doom'd the victim of his pow'r,
 But oh! that thou hadst died at Troy, with all
 They regal state surrounded! not a Greek
 Of all our tribes should then have fail'd t' assist
 At thy funereal rights, and thou hadst left
 Great glory to thy son; but Fate ordain'd
 A death, alas! how terrible, for thee.

To whom Atrides' spirit thus replied:
 Blest son of Peleus, semblance of the Gods,
 At Ilium, far from Argos, fall'n! for whom 40
 Contending, many a Trojan, many a chief
 Of Greece died also, while thy body, whelm'd
 In circling dust, a wide-spread ruin lay,
 Nor chariot thee nor steed could int'rest more!
 All day we wag'd the battle, nor at last
 Desisted, but for tempests sent from Jove.
 At length, we bore into the Grecian fleet
 Thy body from the field; there first we cleans'd
 With tepid baths and oil'd thy shapely corse,
 Then plac'd thee on thy bier, while many a Greek 50
 Around thee wept, and shore his locks for thee.
 Thy mother also (those dread tidings heard),
 With all her nymphs emerging from the Deep,
 And all, as with one voice, bewailing thee,
 Come thither. Terrour then seiz'd all the Greeks,
 And ev'ry warrior had return'd on board
 That moment, had not Nestor, ancient chief,
 Illum'd by long experience, interpos'd;
 He, wisest ever, thus our host bespake:

Fly not, ye warlike youths! Ye Grecians, stay! 60
 This is the Goddess-mother; Thetis comes,
 With all her nymphs emerging from the Deep,
 T' enhance the fun'ral honours of her son.

So he; and, by his admonition staid,
 The Greeks fled not. Then all around thee stood
 The daughters of the Ancient of the Deep,
 Bewailing thy decease; with heav'nly robes
 They cloth'd thy corse, and all the Muses nine
 Deplor'd thee in full choir with sweetest tones

Responsive, nor one Grecian hadst thou seen 79
Dry-ey'd, such Grief the Muses mov'd in all.
Thee, sev'nteen days, we, day and night, deplor'd,
Both Gods and men; and on the eighteenth day,
Slaught'ring the fattest of the flocks and herds
Around it, gave thy body to the flames
Cloth'd in celestial raiment, while with oil
And richest honey mix'd we fed the fire;
And all our heroes, clad in radiant arms,
Both horse and foot, encompassing thy pile
Clash'd on their shields and deaf'ning was the din. 80
But when the force of Vulcan had at length
Consum'd thee, mingling, at the dawn of day,
Thy bones with lard and undulated wine,
We stor'd them in a golden urn supplied
By Thetis, which from Bacchus, as she said,
Herself receiv'd, and He from Vulcan's hand.
Within that vase, Achilles, treasur'd lie
Thine and the bones of thy departed friend
Patroclus; but a sep'rate urn we gave
To those of Brave Antilochus, of all 90
The Greeks Patroclus slain, thy fav'rite most.
Each urn we compass'd with a noble tomb
(We warriors of the sacred Argive host),
On a tall promontory shooting far
Into the spacious Hellespont, that all
Who live, and who shall yet be born, may view
Thy record, even from the distant waves.
Then, by permission from the Gods obtain'd,
To the Achaian chiefs in circus met
Thetis appointed games. I have beheld 100
The burial rites of many a hero bold,
When on the death of some great chief, the youths
Well-girt have rush'd to contest for the prize;
But sight of those with wonder fill'd me most,
So glorious past all others were the games,
By silver-footed Thetis giv'n for thee,
For thou wast ever favour'd of the Gods.
Thus, hast thou not, Achilles! ev'n in death,
Foregone thy glory, but thy fair report
Is universal among all mankind; 110
But, as for me, what recompense had I,

My warfare clos'd? for whom, at my return,
Jove plann'd so dire a death, the bloody deed
Of fell Ægisthus and my murd'ress wife.

Thus, mutual, they conferr'd; mean time ap-
proach'd

Wing-footed Hermes, herald of the skies,
Conducting thither all the shades of those
Slain by Ulysses. At that sight amaz'd
Both mov'd toward them. Agamemnon's shade
(For they had met in Ithaca) knew well 120
The spectre of Melanthius' haughty son
Amphimedon, of whom he thus inquir'd:

Amphimedon! by what disastrous chance,
Coevals as ye seem, and of an air
Distinguish'd all, descend ye to the Deep?
For not the chosen youths of a whole town
Should form a nobler band. Perish'd ye sunk
Amid vast billows and rude tempests rais'd
By Neptune's power? or on dry land through force
Of lawless ravagers, who would have seiz'd 130
Your flocks and herds? or fighting to secure
From hostile power your city and your wives?
Resolve me; I was once a guest of thine.
Remember'st not what time at your abode
With godlike Menelaus I arriv'd,
That we might win Ulysses, with his fleet,
To follow us to Troy? that labour cost
The Grecian fleet a tedious month's delay,
And scarce, with all that we could urge, we gain'd
The city-spoiling hero's aid at last. 140

To whom the spectre of Melanthius' son:
Illustrious Agamemnon, king of men!
All this I bear in mind, and will rehearse
The manner of our most disastrous end.
Believing brave Ulysses lost, we sought
His wife in marriage; our unwelcome suit
She neither ratified nor yet refus'd,
But, planning dire destruction for us all,
This novel stratagem at last devis'd.
Beginning, in her own recess, a web 150
Of slend'rest thread, and of a length and breadth
Unusual, thus the suitors she bespake:

Princes, my suitors! since the noble chief
Ulysses is no more, enforce not yet
My nuptials; wait till I shall finish first
A fun'ral robe (lest all my threads decay)
Which for the ancient hero I prepare,
Laertes, looking for the mournful time
When ruthless fate shall close his languid eyes
So fast, that he shall ope them never more; 160
Else I the censure dread of all my sex,
Should he, so wealthy, want at last a shroud.

So spake the queen; and, unsuspecting, we
Consented readily. Thenceforth, all day
She wove her ample web, and by the aid
Of torches ravell'd it again at night.
Three years she thus by stratagem our suit
Eluded safe; but when the fourth arriv'd,
And the same season, after many moons
And fleeting days, return'd, a damsel then 170
Of her attendants, conscious of the fraud,
Reveal'd it, and we found her pulling loose
The splendid web. Thus, thro' constraint, at length,
She finish'd it, and in her own despight.
But when, at length, sun-bright or as the moon,
She spread the new-blanch'd texture in our view,
Then, under conduct of some adverse Pow'r,
Ulysses reach'd a cottage at th' extreme
Of all his pastures, where his swineherd dwells,
To which came also, from the Pylia shore, 180
The godlike hero's son; and when the death
Of all the suitors they had there devis'd,
They sought the city; but Ulysses last,
And first Telemachus. The father came
Conducted by the swineherd, and attir'd
In tatters foul; a mendicant he seem'd,
Time-worn, and halted on a staff. So clad,
And ent'ring on the sudden, he deceiv'd
The mem'ries even of our eldest there,
And we revil'd and smote him; he, although 190
Beneath his own roof smitten and reproach'd,
With patience suffer'd it awhile; but, rous'd
At length by thunder-bearing Jove, convey'd,
In concert with Telemachus, his arms

And armour to the chamber of his son
At the house-top, and barr'd the massy doors.
Then, in his subtlety, the queen he bade
A contest institute with bow and rings
Between th' ill-fated suitors; whence ensu'd
Slaughter to all. No suitor there had pow'r 200
To bend that stubborn bow, but all alike
Too feeble prov'd; and when the weapon huge
At length was offer'd to Ulysses' hands,
With clamour'd menaces we bade the swain
Withhold it still, plead for it as he might;
Telemachus alone, with loud command,
Bade give it him; and his illustrious sire,
Receiving in his hand the bow, with ease
Bent it, and sped a shaft through all the rings.
Then, springing to the portal steps, he pour'd 210
His arrows forth, peer'd terrible around,
Pierc'd king Antinoüs, and, aiming sure
The deadly darts, pierc'd many a suitor more,
Till in one common carnage heap'd we lay.
Some God, it was most clear, vouchsaf'd them aid,
Such ardour urg'd them, and with such dispatch
They slew us on all sides; hideous were heard
The groans of dying men fell'd to the ground
With head-strokes rude, and the floor swam with blood.
Such, royal Agamemnon! was the fate 220
By which we perish'd, all whose bodies lie
Unburied still, and in Ulysses' house,
For tidings none have yet our friends alarm'd
And kindred, who might cleanse from sable gore
Our clotted wounds, and mourn us on the bier,
Sad rites! but needful to th' unhappy dead.

Him answer'd then the shade of Atreus' son:
O happy offspring of Laertes! shrewd
Ulysses! matchless valour hast thou shown,
Recov'ring thus thy wife; how kind and good 230
Was also thy Penelope to thee!
And her remembrance of the spouse, her choice
In early youth, how faithful and how true!
Thy glory, by superiour merit earn'd,
Shall never fade; and when the tuneful bard
Shall purpose his divinest song, the Gods

Shall make thy chaste Penelope the theme.
Not such was Clytemnestra, she contriv'd
Her husband's death ; no praises shall attend
Her name in song ; and even virtuous wives 240
Shall suffer shame, suspected for her sake.

Thus they, beneath the vaulted roof obscure
Of Pluto's mansion, mutually conferr'd.

Mean time, descending from the city-gates,
They quickly reach'd the cultivated farm,
Which old Laertes had with strenuous toil
Won from the rugged waste. There stood his house
Amidst encircling cabins, where his hinds,
Whose aid he needed, and whose labours pleas'd
And satisfied him, ate and took repose. 250

There also dwelt an old Sicilian dame,
Who serv'd and tended with assiduous care,
In his sequester'd home, their ancient lord.
Then thus Ulysses to his followers spake :

Haste now, and, ent'ring, slay ye of the swine
The best for our regale ; myself, the while,
Will prove my father, if his eye be true
To show me to him, or if absence long
Have worn all knowledge of me from his mind.

He said, and gave his armour to the care 260
Of his own servants ; they with hasty steps
The mansion sought, and he the garden-plot,
To prove his father. There he neither found,
At his descent into the fruitful scene,
Dolius nor Dolius' sons, nor other swain
Or lab'rer ; they were occupied elsewhere,
And, with the ancient hind himself, employ'd
Collecting thorns, with which to fence the grove.
In that umbrageous spot he found alone
Laertes, hoeing weeds around a plant ; 270
Sordid his tunic was, with many a patch
Unseemly mended ; leathern were his greaves,
Thong-tied and also patch'd, a frail defence
Against sharp thorns, while gloves secur'd his hands
From brier-points, and on his head he bore
A goat-skin casque, indulging hopeless wo.
No sooner then the chief, his noble son,
Saw him age-worn and wretched, than he paus'd

Beneath a lofty pear-tree's shade to weep.
 There standing much he mus'd, whether, at once,
 Kissing and clasping him, to tell him all, 281
 By what means he had reach'd his native shore,
 Or first by questions curious and minute
 To prove him. His discreeter course, at length,
 He deem'd it were t' assume the stranger's tone,
 And in that mind approach'd him. He the soil
 Still heav'd and weeded, bending o'er his work,
 Around the plant, when his illustrious son,
 Now standing close beside him, thus began :

Old sir ! thou art no novice in these toils 290
 Of culture, but thy garden thrives ; the plants,
 Vines, figs, pears, olives, flow'rs, from side to side
 Of all thy ground, commend thy skill and care.
 But pardon my free censure, if I say,
 That thou art heedless of thyself, at once
 Oppress'd with age, sun-parch'd, and ill-attir'd.
 Not for thy scanty service sake thy lord
 Neglects thee thus, who by thy features seem'st,
 And by thy stately port, thyself a king.
 Old age is privileg'd. A man like thee, 300
 First bath'd and fed, should sink to soft repose.
 But tell me truth—whose husbandman art thou,
 And whose this garden ? answer me besides,
 For I would learn, have I indeed arriv'd
 In Ithaca ? this moment one who pass'd
 Such information gave me ; but he seem'd
 Uncouth and rude, would neither speak nor hear,
 When I demanded if a friend of mine
 Live still, or have already sought the shades.
 For I will tell thee ; therefore mark. Long since 310
 Within my native mansion I receiv'd
 A certain stranger, whom I found a guest
 To me far most acceptable of all,
 Whom I had shelter'd, from what land soe'er,
 Beneath my roof. He was by birth, he said,
 Ithacan, and Laertes claim'd his sire,
 Son of Arcesias. Him conducting home,
 I entertain'd him with the best I might,
 And prov'd by gifts his welcome at my board.
 I gave him seven talents of wrought gold, 320

A goblet, argent all, with flow'rs emboss'd,
 Twelve single cloaks, twelve carpets, mantles twelve
 Of brightest lustre, with as many vests,
 And added four fair damsels, whom he chose
 Himself, well born and well-accomplish'd all.

Then, weeping, thus his ancient sire replied:
 Stranger! thou hast, for certain, reach'd the land
 Of thy inquiry, but thou find'st it held
 By a rude race, and lawless. Vain, alas!
 Were all thy num'rous gifts; yet hadst thou found
 Him living here in Ithaca, thy gifts, 331
 And thy kind treatment of him, at his hands
 Had found just recompense, and thou hadst left
 Our city well-content. But tell me truth,
 What years have pass'd? how many, since my son
 Partook thy friendly banquet? for alas!
 That poor ill-fated wanderer was he.
 But him, far distant both from friends and home,
 Either the rav'ning fishes of the Deep
 Have eaten, or wild beasts and fowls of prey; 340
 Nor was his mother or myself ordain'd
 To bathe his shrouded body with our tears,
 Nor yet Penelope, the chaste, the rich,
 To close her husband's eyes, and with her voice
 Of shrill lament to wail him on his bier,
 Sad tribute all! but pleasing to the dead.
 But tell me also thou, for I would learn,
 Who art thou? whence? where born? and sprung
 from whom?

The bark in which thy godlike friends and thou
 Arriv'd, what station have ye giv'n her here? 350
 Or cam'st thou but as passenger on board
 Another's bark, who landed thee and went?

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied:
 I will with all simplicity relate
 What thou hast ask'd. Of Alybas am I,
 There stands my mansion, and my wealthy sire
 Apheidas is, king Polypæmon's son;
 Myself am nam'd Eperitus; I come
 Driv'n from the shores of Sicily to these
 By furious winds, with which I strove in vain, 360
 And vonder, from your city far remote,

Stands on the meadow's verge my galley moor'd.
 Five years have pass'd, since the unhappy chief,
 Ulysses, left my country; yet the birds
 At his departure hover'd on the right,
 And, in that sign rejoicing, I dismiss'd
 Him joyful also, for alike we hop'd
 To mix in social intercourse, and make
 Exchange of friendly pledges, once again.

He spake; then sorrow as a sable cloud 370
 Involv'd Laertes; gath'ring with both hands
 The dust, he pour'd it on his rev'rend head
 With many a piteous groan. Ulysses' heart
 Commotion felt, and his stretch'd nostrils throb'd
 With agony close-pent, while fix'd he view'd
 His father: then with sudden force he sprang
 Toward him, clasp'd, and kiss'd him, and exclaim'd:

My father! I am he. Thou seest thy son,
 Absent these twenty years, at last return'd.
 But bid thy sorrow cease; suspend henceforth 380
 All lamentation; for I tell thee true,
 But hastily, for so the time demands,
 I have slain all the suitors at our home,
 And all their taunts and injuries aveng'd.

Then answer thus Laertes quick return'd:
 If thou hast come again, and art indeed
 My son Ulysses, give me then the proof
 Indubitable, that I may believe.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied:
 View first the scar, which with his iv'ry tusk 390
 A wild boar gave me, when, at thy command
 And at my mother's, to Parnassus' foot,
 Where dwelt her sire Autolycus, I sped,
 Seeking the gifts, which, while a guest of yours,
 He promis'd should be mine. Accept beside
 This proof. I will enum'rate all the trees,
 Which, walking with thee in this cultur'd spot
 (Boy then) I begg'd, and thou confirm'dst my own.
 We pac'd between them, and thou mad'st me learn
 The name of each. Thou gav'st me thirteen pears,
 Ten apples, forty figs, and fifty rows 401
 Of vines didst promise me, their alleys clear
 From all plants else. What time propitious Jove

Matures the full-grown fruitage, on those vines
Huge, of all sorts, the luscious clusters hung.

He said; with falt'ring knees and throbbing heart
Those proofs acknowledging, Laertes cast
His arms around him, and Ulysses held
Close to his bosom press'd his fainting sire,
Till, his exhausted spirit and his pow'r 410
Of speech restor'd, the senior thus exclaim'd:

Still, then, ye Gods! your influence unimpair'd,
Ye govern all beneath, if just revenge,
At last, have reach'd indeed those guilty men.
But terrour shakes me, lest, incens'd, erelong
All Ithaca flock hither, and dispatch
Swift messengers with these dread tidings charg'd
To ev'ry Cephallenian state around.

Him answer'd then Ulysses ever-wise:
Take courage, and, dismissing all such fears, 420
Seek now, with me, thy mansion that adjoins
The garden, whither I have sent my son,
Philæti^{us}, and Eumæus, with command,
That they prepare in haste to spread the board.

So they conferr'd, and to Laertes' house
Pass'd on together; there arriv'd, they found
'Telemachus, with his attendant swains,
Busied in preparation of the meats,
And mingling wine; but, ere they sat to feed,
His old Sicilian matron bath'd and oil'd 430
And wrapp'd Laertes round in fresh attire,
And Pallas, drawing nigh, dilated more
His limbs, and gave his whole majestic form
Increase of amplitude. He left the bath.
His son, amaz'd as he had seen a God
Alighted newly from the skies, exclaim'd:

My father! all decrepitude of age
Hath left thee; surely some immortal Pow'r
Hath giv'n thee back thy youthful prime again!

Then thus replied his venerable sire: 440
Jove! Pallas! Phœbus! O that I had fought
Beside thee yesterday, my force the same
As when I led my Cephallenian host
To yonder continent, and overthrew
The tow'rs of Nericus! If such in arms,

And such as then in vigour, I had fac'd
With thee the suitors, surely thou hadst felt
Thy soul, so deeply wounded, fill'd at length
With comfort for the many slain by me.

Such was their conference; and now, the task 450
Of preparation ended, and the feast
Set forth, on couches and on thrones they sat,
And, rang'd in order due, took each his share.
Then, ancient Dolius, and with him his sons,
Arriv'd from work, all weary, summon'd home
By the Sicilian matron wont to serve
The youths with food, and with especial care
T' attend their father, worn with many years.
They, seeing and recalling soon to mind
Ulysses, in the middle mansion stood 460

Wond'ring; when thus Ulysses with a voice
Of some reproof, but gentle, them bespake:

Sit to the board, old friend! and cease to gaze
With mute astonishment; for, though distress'd
With hunger, we have now long-time abstain'd,
Expecting ev'ry moment thy return.

He said; then Dolius with expanded arms
Sprang right toward Ulysses, seiz'd his hand,
Kiss'd it, and in wing'd accents thus replied:

Dear master! since the Gods, at our request, 470
And past our hopes, have giv'n thee to return,
Hail, and be happy, and Heav'n make thee such!
But tell me truly, knows the prudent queen
That thou hast safe arriv'd, or shall we send
Ourselves a herald with the joyful news?

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied:
My friend of many years! release thy mind
From that solicitude, she knows it well.

He spake, and Dolius, satisfied, resum'd
His wonted seat, while, in like sort, his sons, 480
All welcoming Ulysses, grasp'd his hand,
Then sat beside their father; thus beneath
Laertes' roof they joyful took repast.

But Fame with rapid haste the city roam'd
In ev'ry part, promulging in all ears
The suitors' horrid fate. Those tidings urg'd
The parents of the suitors quickly forth,

And, from all sides of Ithaca, with groans,
 And mingled mutt'rings of revenge, they sought
 Ulysses' gates. Producing thence the dead, 490
 They gave immediate burial to their own,
 But those of other cities sent on board
 Swift-sailing fish-boats to their sev'ral homes.
 All hasted then to council; sorrow wrung
 Each parent's heart, and soon as on full seats
 The whole assembled senate sat, uprose
 Eupithes first; for anguish on his soul
 Prey'd, past endurance, for Antinoüs' sake,
 His darling son, slain foremost of them all.
 His loss with tears deploring, thus he said: 500

My friends! no trivial fruits the Grecians reap
 Of this man's doings. *Those* whom, when he sail'd,
 On board his barks he took, a num'rous train
 And valiant,—*those* with all his barks he lost,
 And *these*, our noblest, slew at his return.
 But haste, and ere he reach by swift escape
 The Pylian, or perhaps the sacred shore
 Of Elis by the brave Epeans rul'd,
 Pursue him, or eternal shame is ours;
 And if we visit not with swift revenge 510
 The murd'ers of those whom most we lov'd,
 Our sons and brothers, may my future days
 Prove cheerless all, and instant death alone
 Seem worth a wish to me! Then fly we swift,
 To seize them all, ere they shall cross the Deep.

So spake he weeping, and soft pity mov'd
 In ev'ry breast. Then newly from the bands
 Of sleep releas'd came Medon, leading forth
 The sightless Phemius from Ulysses' house.
 Both stood before them. Wonder at that sight 520
 Seiz'd all; when Medon, prudent, thus began:

Hear me, my countrymen! Ulysses plann'd,
 With no disapprobation of the Gods,
 The deed that ye deplore. I saw, myself,
 A Pow'r immortal at the hero's side,
 Clad in the form of Mentor; now the God,
 In front apparent, led him on; and now,
 From side to side of all the palace, urg'd
 To flight the suitors; heaps on heaps they fell.

He said; then terrour wan seiz'd ev'ry cheek, 530
 And Halitherses, hero old, the son
 Of Mastor, who alone among them all
 By past experience taught had skill to judge
 The future also, prudent, thus began:

Ye men of Ithaca! now list to me.
 These evils have ye caus'd yourselves, my friends!
 By your own negligence; for when myself
 And noble Mentor counsell'd you to check
 Th' excesses of your sons, ye would not hear.
 Great was their wickedness, and flagrant wrong 540
 They wrought, the wealth devouring and the wife
 Dishonouring of an illustrious chief,
 Whom they deem'd destin'd never to return.
 Now, therefore, hear me. Go not; lest ye pull
 Fresh mischief on your own devoted heads.

He ended; then with boist'rous roar (although
 The wiser kept their seats) upsprang the most,
 For Halitherses pleas'd them not, they chose
 Eupithes' counsel rather; all at once
 To arms they flew, and, clad in dazzling steel, 550
 Before the city, form'd their dense array.
 Leader infatuate, at their head appear'd
 Eupithes, hoping vengeance for his son
 Antinoüs, but was himself ordain'd
 To meet his doom, and to return no more.
 Then thus Minerva to Saturnian Jove:

O father! son of Saturn! Jove supreme!
 Declare the purpose hidden in thy breast.
 Design'st thou civil discord, and the woes
 Of bloody strife, or lasting peace for these? 560

To whom the Sov'reign of the realms of air:
 Why asks my daughter? didst thou not design
 Thyself, that brave Ulysses, coming home,
 Should slay those profligates? thyself decide,
 But thus I counsel. Since the noble chief
 Hath slain the suitors, now let peace ensue
 Oath bound, and reign Ulysses evermore!
 From their remembrance strike we clean, ourselves,
 Their slaughter'd sons and brethren; let the bond
 Of mutual firm accord, as heretofore, 570
 Unite them, and let wealth and peace abound.

So saying, he stimulated and impell'd
Minerva prompt before, and to the fields
Of Ithaca with instant flight she sped.
Mean time Ulysses (for their hunger now
And thirst were sated) thus his hinds bespake :

Look ye abroad, lest haply they approach.
He said, and at his word forth went a son
Of Dolius; at the gate he stood, and thence
Beholding all that multitude at hand, 580
In accents wing'd Ulysses thus appris'd :

Fly to your arms—they are at hand—they come.
Then all arising put their armour on,
Ulysses with his three, and the six sons
Of Dolius; Dolius also with the rest
Arm'd, and Laertes, although silver-hair'd,
Warriors perforce. When all were clad alike
In radiant armour, throwing wide the gates
They sallied, and Ulysses led the way.
Then Jove's own daughter Pallas in the form 590
And with the voice of Mentor, came in view ;
Whom seeing, Laertiades rejoic'd,
And thus Telemachus, his son, bespake :

Telemachus! with fearless strides advance,
And, self-instructed, thou shalt quickly learn,
Where fight the bravest. Shame not, now, my son!
Thine and my brave forefathers, whose exploits
Have shar'd, so long, such universal praise.

To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied :
My father ! Thou shalt witness, if thou wilt, 600
Thyself, my deeds, and seeing them, shalt own,
That they disgrace not aught or tarnish theirs.

Laertes heard, and with delight exclaim'd—
What sun hath ris'n to day ? ye blessed Gods !
My son and grandson emulous dispute
The prize of fame—O joyful day to me !

Then, drawing nigh, Minerva thus address'd
The veteran king !—Laertes ! O my friend !
And most lov'd of all whom such I deem,
Pray'r off'ring to the virgin azure-ey'd, 610
And to her father Jove, delay not, shake
Thy lance in air, and give it instant flight.

So saying, the Goddess nerv'd his arm anew

Then, first adoring Pallas, daughter dread
Of sov'reign Jove, he shook his quiv'ring lance,
Hurl'd it, and pierc'd Eupithes. Cheek'd with brass
His helmet was, but through the cloven plate
Swift flew the spear, and started forth beyond.
He fell, and loud his batter'd armour rang.

Then both Ulysses and his noble son 620
With falchions and with spears of keenest edge
Their hosts assail'd, and of them all had left
None living, none had to his home return'd,
But that Jove's virgin daughter with a voice
Of loud authority thus quell'd them all:

Peace, O ye men of Ithaca! while yet
The field remains undelug'd with your blood.

So she; then fear at once pal'd ev'ry cheek.
All trembled at the voice divine; their arms
Escaping from the grasp fell to the ground, 630
And, covetous of longer life, each fled
Back to the city. Then Ulysses sent
His voice abroad, and with an eagle's force
Sprang on the people; but Saturnian Jove
Cast down, incontinent, his smould'ring bolt
At Pallas' feet, and thus the Goddess spake:

Laertes' noble son, for wiles renown'd!
Forbear; abstain from slaughter; lest thyself
Incur the vengeance of Saturnian Jove.

So Pallas, whom Ulysses glad obey'd. 640
Then faithful covenants of peace between
Both sides ensu'd, sworn duly in the sight
Of Jove-born Pallas, who the Mentor seem'd,
In voice and form, familiar to them all.

THE
BATTLE
OF THE
FROGS AND MICE;

TRANSLATED INTO
ENGLISH BLANK VERSE,

BY THE SAME HAND.

BATTLE

181

BATTLE

FROGS AND MICE

EXCISE BLANK VENT

OF THE EAST HALL

THE
BATTLE
OF THE
FROGS AND MICE.

DESCEND all Helicon into my breast !
O ev'ry virgin of the tuneful choir
Breathe on my song, which I have newly trac'd
In tables open'd on my knees, a song
Of bloodiest note—terrible deeds of Mars,
Well worthy of the ears of all mankind,
Whom I desire to teach, how erst the Mice
Assail'd the Frogs, mimicking in exploit
The prowess of the giant race earth-born.
The rumour once was frequent in the mouths 10
Of mortal men, and thus the strife began.

A thirsty Mouse (thirsty with fear and flight
From a cat's claws) sought out the nearest lake,
Where, dipping in the flood his downy chin,
He drank delighted. Him the frog far-fam'd
Limnocharis (*a*) espied, and thus he spake :

Who art thou, stranger ? whence hast thou arriv'd
On this our border, and who gave thee birth ?
Beware thou trespass not against the truth ;
Lie not ! for should I find thy merit such 20
As claims my love, I will conduct thee hence
To my abode, where gifts thou shalt receive
Lib'ral and large, with hospitable fare.
I am the king Physignathus, (*b*) rever'd
By the inhabitants of all this pool,
Chief of the frogs for ever. Me, long since,

(*a*) The beauty of the lake.

(*b*) The pouter.

Peleus (*a*) begat, embracing on the banks
 Of the Eridanus my mother fair,
 Hydromedusa. (*b*) Nor thee less than king,
 Or leader bold in fight, thy form proclaims, 30
 Stout as it is, and beautiful.—Dispatch—
 Speak, therefore, and declare thy pedigree.

He ceas'd, to whom Psycharpax (*c*) thus replied:
 Illustrious sir! wherefore hast thou inquir'd
 My derivation, known to all, alike
 To Gods and men, and to the fowls of Heav'n?
 I am Psycharpax, and the dauntless chief
 Troxartes (*d*) is my sire, whose beauteous spouse
 Daughter of Pternotroctes (*e*) brought me forth,
 Lichomyle (*f*) by name. A cave of earth 40
 My cradle was, and, in my youngling state,
 My mother nourish'd me with almonds, figs,
 And delicacies of a thousand names.
 But diverse as our natures are, in nought
 Similar, how, alas! can we be friends?
 The floods are thine abode, while I partake
 With man his sustenance. The basket, stor'd
 With wheaten loaves thrice kneaded, scapes not me,
 Nor wafer broad, enrich'd with balmy sweets,
 Nor ham in slices spread, nor liver wrapp'd 50
 In tunic silver-white, nor curds express'd
 From sweetest milk, nor, sweeter still, the full
 Honeycomb, coveted by kings themselves,
 Nor aught by skilful cook invented yet
 Of sauce or seas'ning for delight of man.
 I am brave also, and shrink not at sound
 Of glorious war, but rushing to the van,
 Mix with the foremost combatants. No fear
 Of man himself shakes me, vast as he is,
 But to his bed I steal, and make me sport 60
 Nibbling his fingers' end, or with sharp tooth
 Fretting his heel so neatly, that he sleeps
 Profound the while, unconscious of the bite.
 Two things, of all that are, appal me most,
 The owl and cat. These cause me many a pang.

(*a*) Of or belonging to mud.

(*c*) The crumb-catcher.

(*e*) The bacon-eater.

(*b*) Governess of the waters.

(*d*) The bread-eater.

(*f*) The lick of mill-stones.

As does the hollow gin insidious, fair
 In promises, but in performance foul,
 Engine of death ! yet most of all I dread
 Cats, nimble mousers, who can dart a paw
 After me, enter at what chink I may. 70

But to return—your diet, parsley, kail,
 Beet, radish, gourd, (for, as I understand
 Ye eat no other), are not to my taste.

Him then with smiles answer'd Physignathus :
 Stranger ! thou vauntest much thy dainty fare,
 But, both on shore and in the lake, we boast
 Our dainties also, and such sights as much
 Would move thy wonder ; for by gift from Jove
 We leap as well as swim, can range the land
 For food, or, diving, seek it in the Deep. 80

Wouldst thou the proof ? 'tis easy—mount my back—
 There cling as for thy life, and thou shalt share
 With rapture the delights of my abode.

He said, and gave his back. Upsprang the mouse
 Lightly, and with his arms enfolded fast
 The frog's soft neck. Pleas'd was he, at the first,
 With view of many a creek and bay, nor less
 With his smooth swimming on whose back he rode.
 But when, at length, the clear wave dash'd his sides,
 Then fill'd with penitential sorrows vain 90
 He wept, pluck'd off his hair, and gath'ring close
 His hinder feet, survey'd with trembling heart
 The novel sight, and wish'd for land again.
 Groans follow'd next, extorted groans, through stress
 Of shiv'ring fear, and, with extended tail
 Drawn like a long oar after him, he pray'd
 For land again ; but, while he pray'd again
 The clear wave dash'd him. Much he shriek'd
 and much

He clamour'd and at length thus sorrowing, said :

Oh desp'rate navigation strange ! not thus 100
 Europa floated to the shores of Crete
 On the broad back of her enamour'd bull.

And now, dread spectacle to both, behold
 A Hydra ! on the lake with crest erect
 He rode, and right toward them. At that sight
 Down went Physignathus, heedless, alas !

Through fear, how great a prince he should destroy.
 Himself, at bottom of the pool escap'd
 The dreadful death; but, at his first descent
 Dislodg'd, Psycharpax fell into the flood. 110
 There, stretch'd supine, he clench'd his hands, he
 shriek'd,

Plung'd oft, and, lashing out his heels afar,
 Oft rose again, but no deliv'rance found.
 At length, oppress'd by his drench'd coat, and soon
 To sink for ever, thus he prophesied:

Thou hast releas'd thy shoulders at my cost,
 Physignathus! unfeeling as the rock,
 But not unnotic'd by the Gods above.
 Ah worst of traitors! on dry land, I ween,
 Thou hadst not foil'd me, whether in the race, 120
 Or wrestling-match, or at whatever game.
 Thou hast by fraud prevail'd, casting me off
 Into the waters; but an eye divine
 Sees all. Nor hope thou to escape the host
 Of Mice, who shall, ere long, avenge the deed.

So saying, he sank and died, whom, while he sat
 Reposing on the lake's soft verge, the Mouse
 Lichopinax (a) observ'd; aloud he wail'd,
 And flew with those sad tidings to his friends.
 Grief, at the sound, immeasurable seiz'd 130
 On all, and, by command, at dawn of day
 The heralds call'd a council at the house
 Of brave Troxartes, father of the prince
 Now lost, a carcass now, nor nigh to land
 Welt'ring but distant in the middle pool.
 The multitude in haste conven'd, uprose
 Troxartes, for his son incens'd, and said:

Ah friends! although my damage from the Frogs
 Sustain'd be greatest, yet is yours not small.
 Three children I have lost, wretch that I am, 140
 All sons. A merciless and hungry cat,
 Finding mine eldest son abroad, surpris'd
 And slew him. Lur'd into a wooden snare
 (New machination of unfeeling man
 For slaughter of our race, and nam'd a trap)

(a) The dish-licker.

My second died. And now, as ye have heard,
 My third, his mother's and my darling, him
 Physignathus hath drown'd in yon abyss.
 Haste therefore, and in gallant armour bright
 Attir'd, march forth, ye Mice, now seek the foe. 150

So saying, he rous'd them to the fight, and Mars
 Attendant arm'd them. Splitting, first, the pods
 Of beans, which they had sever'd from the stalk
 With hasty tooth by night, they made them greaves.
 Their corselets were of platted straw, well lin'd
 With spoils of an excoriated cat.
 The lamp contributed its central tin,
 A shield for each. The glitt'ring needle long
 Arm'd ev'ry gripe with a terrific spear,
 And auburn shells of nuts their brows enclos'd. 160

Thus arm'd the Mice advanc'd, of whose approach
 The Frogs appriz'd, emerging from the lake,
 All throng'd to council, and consid'ring sat
 The sudden tumult and its cause. Then came,
 Sceptre in hand, a herald. Son was he
 Of the renown'd Tyroglyphus, (a) and call'd
 Embasichytrus (b). Charg'd he came to announce
 The horrors of approaching war, and said—

Ye Frogs! the host of Mice send you by me
 Menaces and defiance. Arm, they say, 170
 For furious fight; for they have seen the prince
 Psycharpax welt'ring on the waves, and drown'd
 By king Physignathus. Ye then, the chiefs
 And leaders of the host or Frogs, put on
 Your armour, and draw forth your bands to battle!

He said, and went. Then were the noble Frogs
 Troubled at that bold message, and while all
 Murmur'd against Physignathus, the king,
 Himself arising, thus denied the charge: 179

My friends! I neither drown'd the Mouse, nor saw
 His drowning. Doubtless, while he strove in sport
 To imitate the swimming of the Frogs,
 He sank and died. Thus, blame is none in me,
 And these injurious sland'rers do me wrong.
 Consult we, therefore, how we may destroy

(a) A cheese-rasper.

(b) The explorer of pots and pipkins.

The subtle Mice, which thus we will perform.
 Arm'd and adorn'd for battle, we will wait
 Their coming where our coast is most abrupt.
 Then, soon as they shall rush to the assault,
 Seizing them by the helmet, as they come, 190
 We will precipitate them, arms and all,
 Into the lake; unskilful as they are
 To swim, their suffocation there is sure,
 And we will build a trophy to record
 The great Mouse-massacre for evermore.

So saying, he gave commandment, and all arm'd.
 With leaves of mallows each his legs incas'd,
 Guarded his bosom with a corselet cut
 From the green beet, with foliage tough of kail
 Fashion'd his ample buckler, with a rush 200
 Keen-tipp'd, of length tremendous, fill'd his gripe,
 And on his brows set fast a cockle-shell.
 Then on the summit of the loftiest bank,
 Drawn into phalanx firm, they stood; all shook
 Their quiv'ring spears, and wrath swell'd ev'ry breast.

Jove saw them, and assembling all the Gods
 To counsel in the skies, Behold, he said,
 Yon num'rous hosts, magnanimous, robust,
 And rough with spears, how like the giant race
 They move, or like the Centaurs! smiling, next,
 He ask'd of all the Gods, who favour'd most 211
 The Mice, and who the Frogs: but, at the last,
 Turning towards Minerva, thus he spake:

The Mice, my daughter, need thee; go'st thou not,
 To aid thy friends the Mice, inmates of thine,
 Who to thy temple drawn by sav'ry steams
 Sacrificial, and day by day refresh'd
 With dainties there, dance on thy sacred floor?

So spake the God, and Pallas thus replied:
 My father! suffer as they may, the Mice 220
 Shall have no aid from me, whom much they wrong,
 Marring my wreaths, and plund'ring of their oil
 My lamps.—But this, of all their impious deeds,
 Offends me most, that they have eaten holes
 In my best mantle, which with curious art
 Divine I wove, light, easy, delicate;
 And now the artificer, whom I employ'd

To mend it, clamouring demands a price
 Exorbitant, which moves me much to wrath,
 For I obtained on trust those costly threads, 250
 And have not wherewithal to pay th' arrear.
 Nor love I more the Frogs, or purpose more
 To succour even them, since they not less,
 Dolts as they are, and destitute of thought,
 Have incommoded me. For when, of late,
 Returning from a fight weary and faint
 I needed rest, and would have slept, no sleep
 Found I, those ceaseless croakers of the lake
 Noisy, perverse, forbidding me a wink.

Sleepless, and with an aching head I lay, 240
 Therefore, until the crowing of the cock.

By my advice, then, O ye Gods, move not,
 Nor interfere, favouring either side,
 Lest ye be wounded; for both hosts alike
 Are valiant, nor would scruple to assail
 Even ourselves. Suffice it, therefore hence
 To view the battle, safe, and at our ease.

She ceas'd, and all complied. Mean time, the hosts
 Drew nearer, and in front of each was seen
 A herald, gonfalon in hand; huge gnats 250
 Through clarions of unwieldy length sang forth
 The dreadful note of onset fierce, and Jove
 Doubled the signal, thund'ring from above.

First with his spear Hypsiboas (a) assail'd
 Lichenor (b). Deep into his body rush'd
 The point, and pierc'd his liver. Prone he fell,
 And all his glossy down with dust defil'd.
 Then Troglodytes (c) hurl'd his massy spear
 At Pelion (d), which he planted in his chest.
 Down dropp'd the Frog, night whelm'd him, and he
 died. 260

Seutlæus (e), through his heart piercing him, slew
 Embasichytrus. Polyphonus (f) fell,
 Pierc'd through his belly by the spear of bold
 Artophagus (g), and prone in dust expir'd.

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| (a) The loud-croaker. | (b) One addicted to licking. |
| (c) A creeper into holes and crannies. | |
| (d) Offspring of the mud. | (e) A feeder on beet. |
| (f) The noisy. | (g) The bread-eater. |

Incens'd at sight of Polyphonus slain,
 Limnocharis at Troglodytes cast
 A mill-stone weight of rock; full on the neck
 He batter'd him, and darkness veil'd his eyes.
 At him Lichenor hurl'd a glitt'ring lance,
 Nor err'd, but pierc'd his liver. Trembling fled 270
 Crambophagus (a) at that dread sight, and plung'd
 Over the precipice into the lake,
 Yet even there found refuge none, for brave
 Lichenor following, smote him even there.
 So fell Crambophagus, and from that fall
 Never arose, but redd'ning with his blood
 The wave, and wallowing in the strings and slime
 Of his own vitals, near the bank expir'd.
 Limnisius (b) on the grassy shore struck down
 Tyroglyphus (c); but, at the view alone 280
 Of terrible Pternoglyphus (d) appall'd,
 Fled Calaminthus (e), cast away his shield
 Afar, and headlong plung'd into the lake.
 Hydrocharis (f) with a vast stone assail'd
 The king Pternophagus (g); the rugged mass,
 Descending on his poll, crush'd it; the brain
 Ooz'd through his nostrils drop by drop, and all
 The bank around was spatter'd with his blood.
 Lichopinax with his long spear transpierc'd
 Borborocoites (h); darkness veil'd his eyes. 290
 Prassophagus (i) with vengeful notice mark'd
 Cnissodioctes (j); seizing with one hand
 His foot, and with the other hand his neck,
 He plung'd, and held him plung'd, till, drown'd, he
 died.
 Psycharpax, standing boldly in defence
 Of his slain fellow-warriors, urg'd his spear
 Right through Pelusius (k); at his feet he fell,
 And, dying, mingled with the Frogs below.
 Resentful of his death, the mighty Frog
 Pelobates (l) a handful cast of mud 300

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| (a) The cabbage-eater. | (b) Of the lake. |
| (c) The cheese-scraper. | (d) The ham-scraper. |
| (e) So called from the herb calamint. | (g) The bacon-eater. |
| (f) One whose delight is in the water. | (i) The garlic-eater. |
| (h) The sleeper in the mud. | (k) The muddy. |
| (j) The savory-steam hunter. | |
| (l) The mud walker. | |

Full at Psycharpax; all his ample front
 He smear'd, and left him scarce a glimpse of day.
 Psycharpax, at the foul dishonour still
 Exasp'rate more, upheaving from the ground
 A rock, that had encumber'd long the bank,
 Hurl'd it against Pelobates; below
 The knees he smote him, shiver'd his right leg
 In pieces, and outstretch'd him in the dust.
 But him Craugasides (*a*), who stood to guard
 The fallen chief, assail'd; with his long lance 310
 He prick'd Psycharpax at the waist; the whole
 Keen-pointed rush transpierc'd his belly, and all
 His bowels, following the retracted point,
 O'erspread th' ensanguin'd herbage at his side.
 Soon as Sitophagus (*b*), a crippled mouse,
 That sight beheld, limping, as best he could,
 He left the field, and, to avoid a fate
 Not less tremendous, dropp'd into a ditch.
 Troxartes graz'd the instep of the bold
 Physignathus, who, at the sudden pang 320
 Startled, at once leap'd down into the lake.
 Prassæus (*c*), at the sight of such a chief
 Floating in mortal agonies enrag'd,
 Sprang through his foremost warriors, and dismiss'd
 His pointed rush, but reach'd not through his shield
 Troxartes, baffled by the stubborn disk.

There was a Mouse, young, beautiful, and brave
 Past all on earth, son of the valiant chief
 Artepibulus (*d*). Like another Mars
 He fought, and Meridarpax (*e*) was his name, 330
 A Mouse, among all Mice without a peer.
 Glorifying in his might on the lake's verge
 He stood, with other Mouse none at his side,
 And swore t' extirpate the whole croaking race.
 Nor doubted any but he should perform
 His dreadful oath, such was his force in arms,
 Had not Saturnian Jove with sudden note
 Perceiv'd his purpose; with compassion touch'd
 Of the devoted Frogs, the Sov'reign shook

(*a*) The hoarse-croaker,

(*b*) The cake-eater.

(*c*) One who deals much in garlic.

(*d*) One who lies in wait for bread,

(*e*) The scrap-catcher.

His brows, and thus the Deities address'd : 340

I see a prodigy, ye Pow'rs divine !
And, with no small amazement smitten, hear
Prince Meridarpax menacing the Frogs
With gen'ral extirpation. Haste—be quick—
Dispatch we Pallas terrible in fight,
Nor her alone, but also Mars, to quell
With force combin'd the sanguinary chief.

So spake the Thund'rer, and thus Mars replied :
Neither the force of Pallas, nor the force
Of Mars, O Jove ! will save the destin'd Frogs 350
From swift destruction. Let us all descend
To aid them, or, lest all suffice not, grasp
And send abroad thy biggest bolt, thy bolt
Tempestuous, terrour of the Titan race,
By which those daring enemies thou slew'st,
And didst coerce with adamantine chains
Enceladus, and all that monstrous brood.

He said, and Jove dismiss'd the smould'ring bolt.
At his first thunder, to its base he shook
The vast Olympian. Then—whirling about 360
His forky fires, he launch'd them to the ground,
And, as they left the Sov'reign's hand, the heart
Of ev'ry Mouse quak'd, and of ev'ry Frog,
Yet ceas'd not, even at that shock, the Mice
From battle, but with double ardour flew
To the destruction of the Frogs, whom Jove
From the Olympian heights snow-crown'd again
Viewing, compassionated their distress,
And sent them aids. Sudden they came. Broad
back'd

They were, and smooth like anvils, sickle-claw'd, 370
Sideling in gait, their mouths with pincers arm'd
Shell-clad, crook-knee'd, prodruding far before
Long hands and horns, with eye-balls in the breast,
Legs in quarternion rang'd on either side,
And Crabs their name. They, seizing by his leg,
His arm, his tail a Mouse, cropp'd it, and snapp'd
His polish'd spear. Appall'd at such a foe,
The miserable Mice stood not, but fled
Heartless, discomfited.—And now the sun
Descending clos'd this warfare of a day. 580

NOTES.

BOOK I. *Line 32.* The Æthiopians, according to Diodorus Siculus, are said to have been the first of the human race who celebrated the worship of the Gods; from whom they received, in recompense of their devotions, an immunity from conquest by the kings their neighbours.

Line 48. Argus, the son of Arestor, was called the πολυόμματος κύων, or *dog with many eyes*, on account of the vigilance with which he guarded Io the daughter of Inachus; but Mercury, by command of Jupiter, slew him, and was thence entitled the Argicide.

Line 129. We are told, that Homer was under obligations to Mentès, who had frequently given him a passage in his ship to different countries, which he wished to see, for which reason he has here immortalized him.

Line 130. Taphos was one of the Echinades, islands of the Ionian sea, and was inhabited by the Telebœans.

Line 227. Temesa was, according to some, a city of Cyprus, but others find it in Italy.

Line 279. Ἐρᾶνος, a convivial meeting, at which every man paid his proportion, at least contributed something.

Line 318. Ephyre has been already noticed in the Iliad as a city of Thesprotia; but the Ephyre mentioned by Homer both there and here was probably Elis.

Line 321. The poet, it is observed, prepares us to see the suitors die by a single wound of these arrows.

Line 443. This part of the speech of Telemachus has been rejected by some critics, who contend, that, whatever propriety it may have when addressed by Hector to Andromache, it has not the same when addressed by a son to his mother. But Telemachus probably uses it, not as a reproof to her, but that the suitors hearing it may infer from it his determined purpose to take the management of his family henceforth into his own hands. To be master, in short, for the time to come, and a child no longer.

BOOK II. *Line 122.* The web she began was of the largest dimensions and of the finest texture, because a

work of that kind proceeding slowly, both on account of the size and the difficulty with which it would be performed, the suitors would the less wonder at the time it cost to accomplish it.

Line 329. The poet, it is observed by the scholiast, represents Antinoüs as a plain and artless speaker, Eurymachus as vehement and haughty, and Liocritus as a man of not many words, but daring and insolent, who not only expresses himself contemptuously when he mentions Ulysses, but breaks up the council abruptly though he had not convened it.

Line 303. The sentiment is justified by the opinion of many ancients. Ælius Spartianus, in his life of the emperor Severus, says, "It is sufficiently known, that hardly any great man has left a son of much merit or use behind him."—*The sons of heroes are a nuisance*, was proverbial; and Demosthenes observed, that *good and valuable men are so often succeeded by a race of triflers, that it seems the effect of some fatality.*

Line 454. The ancients kept their flour in skins, and not in sacks, which were a subsequent invention, and applied the word measure both to wet and dry.

Line 472. She speaks of the death of Ulysses as a certainty, the more effectually to deter Telemachus from his voyage, though it is plain that she did not in reality consider it as such, since she kept for him with so much care the very best of all the wines intrusted to her.

BOOK III. *Line 10.* In Pylus were nine cities, and each city had a seat or bench appropriated to it.

Line 11. They are said to *taste* them only, because they were a great multitude, and the entrails would not afford more than a taste for each.

Line 70. Plutarch observes, that Minerva rejoices in Pisistratus neither because he is rich, nor because he is beautiful, nor because he is strong, but because he is prudent and judicious.

Line 96. The ancients it is observed, accounted piracy no dishonourable occupation.

Line 169. The wrath of Pallas was occasioned by the rape which Ajax the Locrian perpetrated on Cassandra in the temple of that Goddess; and she avenged it on all the Grecians, because, permitting the offender to go unpunished, they had all alike connived at the enormity.

Line 229. Lesbos was a Trojan island, in which were five cities—Pyrrha, Eressus, Mitylene, Methymna, and Antissa. Chios lay between Psyria and Mimas. Psyria was a small narrow island at no great distance from Chios, and had a harbour, where ships that had suffered

in the Ægean sea took shelter. Mimas was a promontory opposite to Chios, which had its name from Mimas, one of the giants; and Geræstus was a port of Eubœa.

Line 336. We learn from Xenophon, that the Athenians had a law among them, according to which no traitor, or person guilty of sacrilege, once duly convicted, was allowed the rites of burial.

Line 346. The poets of ancient times were not only esteemed as such, but as philosophers also. Therefore Agamemnon, at his departure for Troy, intrusted his wife to the care of such a one whose office it was to inspire her with an ambition to excel in the performance of all female duties, and to divert her attention from trivial and criminal topics by strains of pleasant and instructive poetry. Nor could Ægisthus with all his seductive practices prevail to alienate Clytemnestra from the paths of virtue and honour, till he had first disposed of the bard by banishing him to a desert island.

Line 379. The waves excited by the South would have deprived Phæstus of its haven, had not the rock here mentioned made the water smooth within, receiving the billows first and breaking the force of them.

Line 427. It is said to have been customary in the days of Homer, when the Greeks retired from a banquet to their beds, to cut out the tongues of the victims, and offer them to the Gods in particular who presided over conversation.

Line 459. According to the scholiast, a people of Arcadia, but according to Strabo, a people dwelling in the country of the Epeans.

Line 544. The ancients observed it as a constant practice to make an offering to the Gods at the beginning of a feast, and to pour libation at the end of it; that the company persuaded that the gods, though unseen, were personally present, might abstain from all those outrages into which the occasion might otherwise betray them.

Line 588. The strict morality and modesty of the ancients may be fairly enough inferred from the custom of employing young women, to perform this office for strangers young as themselves. Had the consequences been such as we should have reason to apprehend from the same practice here, it would either never have obtained so universally as it did in Greece, or would quickly have been discontinued.

Line 618. Lacedæmon.

BOOK IV. *Line 13.* From a handmaid called Teridæ, by whom he had also a son named Nicostratus.

Line 51. Hesychius tells us, that the Grecians ornamented with much attention the front wall of their courts for the admiration of passengers.

Line 78. Kings, and chiefs, and important personages, were customarily served with a larger portion than others; not on a supposition that they could eat, or had occasion to eat, more than guests of inferior rank, but that they might have opportunity to compliment whom they pleased with a part of it.

Line 90. Young persons, who have seen little, are frequently astonished at that which their seniors view with indifference. The wonder expressed by Telemachus is therefore perfectly natural.

Line 104. On account of the heat of the climate their horns are said to produce themselves immediately.

Line 228. Antilochus was his brother. The son of Aurora, who slew Antilochus, was Memnon.

Line 244. Because Pisistratus was born after Antilochus had sailed to Troy.

Line 286. Pæon was the physician of the Gods, and not the same with Apollo.

Line 304. Some say, that he engaged in this enterprise to procure himself an opportunity to measure the walls of Troy; others, that he might persuade Helen to co-operate with the Grecians.

Line 319. He might inform the Greeks of his success with Helen, how he had prevailed to win her to their interests, of the Trojan counsels also, and of the dimensions of the walls, especially of the gate to which he intended to adapt the size of the wooden horse. It is not improbable likewise, that on this occasion he contrived to carry off the Palladium.

Line 335. Homer, says Quintilian, when he tells us that the Grecians *sat* in the horse, gives us in one word an idea of its magnitude, as Virgil does of its height, when he tells us that they *let themselves down from it by a rope*.

Line 340. Deiphobus is said to have accompanied her, that, if any one spoke to her from within the horse, he might know it; not choosing to trust her for the discovery of it.

Line 386. Menelaus puts this question to Telemachus, knowing that Pisistratus came only as his companion.

Line 419. By Philomelides some have rather absurdly supposed Patroclus, whose mother's name was Philomela, to be intended. But Homer never forms his patronymics from the mother's side, and why should the Greeks exult in the fall of an amiable man, whom all respected? The person in question is therefore, with more probability, affirmed by others to have been the king of Lesbos, whose custom being to challenge all comers, he challenged, on their arrival in his island, the Grecians also.

Line 426. Proteus.

Line 436. In the heroic ages the distance might be

such; though now, by the accumulation of soil from the mouth of the Nile, it is united to the land, or nearly so.

Line 450. Idothea is said to have been enamoured of Canobus, the pilot of Menelaus.

Line 490. Seals, or sea-calves.

Line 602. Pallas persecuted the Grecians, on their return, for the reason already mentioned, the rape of Cassandra by the Locrian Ajax. Nor was she even so appeased, but, during a period of a thousand years, compelled the Locrians to send annually a certain number of virgins, chosen by lot, to Ilium.

Line 604. The Gyræ were rocks situate very near to the island Myconos, and were so called because they threw the water into whirlpools.

Line 677. The abode of heroes after death; so named either from Elusius of Eleutheræ, a person of uncommon piety, or because the inhabitants suffer no more dissolution. They were called the happy isles, or the isles of the blessed.

Line 726. Herodotus says, that, when the Nile overflows, many lilies grow in the water, of a kind which the Ægyptians name *lotus*; gathering these, they dry them in the sun, and make the fruit into bread, which they eat toasted. The root likewise is eatable, has an agreeable sweetness, is round, and of the size of an apple.

Line 746. It is doubted whether Phædimus is here a proper name, or an epithet signifying *illustrious*. They who understand it in the latter sense affirm this illustrious hero, the king of Sidon, to have been Solomon; in support of which opinion Barnes cites the following passage from Clemens Alexandrinus:

“Iramus or Hiram gave his daughter to Solomon, at the time when Menelaus, returning from the siege of Troy, arrived at Phœnice.”

Sidon was a city of that country.

Line 757. The quoit was commonly a stone, but was sometimes made of iron, and had a thong tied about the middle of it, by which they swung and cast it. What the translation calls a spear was rather a javelin, such as was used in goat-hunting.

Line 826. This transition from the third to the second person belongs to the original, and is considered as a fine stroke of art in the poet, who represents Penelope, in the warmth of her resentment, forgetting where she is, and addressing the suitors as if present.

Line 967. A city of Thessaly, so named from Pheres the founder of it.

Line 1013. This answer of the phantom, is dexterously managed; for to have proceeded to tell the whole truth, and to have informed her that Ulysses was still

alive, would have been incompatible with the sequel, to which it is essential, that Ulysses at his return should be unknown to all, but especially to Penelope.

BOOK V. *Line 2.* Tithonus, son of Laomedon, brother of Priam, husband of Aurora, is called Endymion also. As Endymion, he is mate of the Moon; and as Tithonus, of the Morning. As Endymion, he is fabled to be a hunter and to sleep in the night only, devoting the day to the labours of the chase; but as Tithonus, he is an astronomer and sleeps in the day, watching all the night that he may observe the stars.

Line 41. Scherie, the island of the Phæacians, has since been called Corcyra, but its most ancient name was Drepane. They are said to be ἀγγιθεοί, or to have affinity with the Gods, either on account of their king's descent from Neptune, or because they were a happy people, or because the Gods occasionally visited them and shared their banquets.

Line 98. The poet is supposed to sequester Ulysses on this occasion, that, ignorant of the constraint under which Calypso acted, he might imagine her consent to his departure, and the means with which she furnished him to construct his raft, the effects of kindness merely, and hold himself everlastingly indebted to her.

Line 149. He was the son of Jupiter and Electra the daughter of Atlas, and by his amour with Ceres became the father of Plutus.

Line 220. The water of Styx, according to Pausanias, dripped from a fountain near to Nonacris, a town of Arcadia, and fell into the hollow of a lofty rock, through which it passed into the river Cratis. He adds, that it was fatal to every animal that drank it.

Line 340. The Solymi were a people on the confines of Lycia. Their country was also called Pisidia.

Line 453. An island in front of Eubœa, sacred to Neptune.

Line 556. The poet takes no notice of his obedience to the command of Ino, to turn his face another way when he should cast the zone into the water, but leaves us to take it for granted that the ceremony was not neglected.

BOOK VI. *Line 35.* It is said to have been the custom for the bride to furnish the friends of the bridegroom with the apparel, in which it was proper that they should attend the nuptials.

Line 100. Pausanias says, there was an ancient picture to be seen in his time, representing two virgins drawn by mules, one holding the reins, the other attired in a veil. They were supposed to be Nausicaa and her maid driving to the cisterns or canals, where they washed their linen.

Line 197. Cicero says, that the palm here mentioned by Ulysses was shown as a curiosity in his time. It was fabled to have risen suddenly out of the ground for the use of Latona, that she might support herself either by grasping or leaning against it, when she brought forth Apollo.

Line 277. When a person newly emerged from the sea stands in the sun, the water is soon dried from his body by the heat; but the saline particles condensed will continue to adhere to his skin, till they are washed away with a lotion of some other kind.

Line 349. It is well observed by Eustathius, that the contrivance of Nausicaa, to reveal to Ulysses the love she felt for him by the supposed remark of another, is truly admirable. Had she made the discovery to him speaking in her own person, as he adds, her behaviour would have been insufferable.

Line 404. Neptune.

BOOK VII. *Line 16.* It is Clarke's opinion, that she had neither been captived in war (for the Phæacians waged no wars) nor obtained by purchase, but seized by pirates according to the common practice of the ancients.

Line 41. How comes it then to pass, that they are represented as so extremely hospitable in the sequel? Perhaps the vulgar only are intended in this description; or more probably, as the scholiast observes, Minerva gives them this character, to guard Ulysses against the danger of troublesome and impertinent inquiry, to which he would be exposed, should he make any inquiries himself.

Line 77. Alcinoüs therefore was the uncle of his wife, and we have seen more than one instance in the Iliad of a man wedded to his niece. This double relationship was not uncommon among the Grecians.

Line 88. Barnes, referring his reader to Onomacritus and Apollonius Rhodius, gives the following instance of Areta acting in her judicial capacity. When the ambassadors of Æeta, in the name of their master, demanded from Alcinoüs that his daughter Medea, who had forsaken him and fled to Phæacia with Jason, should be restored to him, and Alcinoüs was willing to comply, considering the condition as a reasonable one, his queen immediately interposed this condition—If she were still a virgin, she might go; otherwise she was Jason's wife, and they ought not to be separated. Jason, being privately informed of the terms, instantly qualified the fugitive to claim him as her husband, and she was protected accordingly.

Line 96. Marathon was a place so named in Attica; and when Pallas is said to enter the house of Erec-

theus, the meaning is, that she entered her own temple, in which Erectheus had his education.

Line 112. Some affirm, that these mastiffs were given by Juno to Neptune as the price of his assistance against Jupiter, and that from Neptune they had passed to Alcinoüs.

Line 171. Because Mercury gave sleep by the touch of his rod, and because he delivered his messages in dreams and visions of the night; but chiefly, according to Plutarch, because he of all the Gods was most attentive to the discourse that passed on convivial occasions, and most concerned in the inspiration of such as was agreeable.

Line 403. Jupiter being enamoured of Elora, daughter of Orchomenus, or, as others say, of Minos, to avoid the jealousy of Juno, concealed her under ground. There she bore him this most extraordinary son, named Tityus, who was beloved by Latona, and shot by Apollo. Rhadamanthus is supposed to have made this visit to Tityus on a charitable account, and, being himself a just man, for the sake of instructing him.

Line 414. Ulysses gives not a direct answer to the obliging proposal of Alcinoüs to bestow on him his daughter, because it would have seemed harsh to refuse her. His prayer, expressive as it is of his impatience to return, and of his gratitude to the person who furnishes him with means of doing so, is an indirect indeed, but a delicate and sufficient answer.

BOOK VIII. *Line 26.* The poet pluralizes the single effort with the *discus*, probably because, though Ulysses performed no feat beside, he offered himself to a trial in many others, excepting against the foot-race only. Minerva therefore thus improves his figure, that it may evidence the justness of his pretensions.

Line 74. As in the *Iliad*, says Eustathius, the poet deals out good and evil from his two casks respectively, so here he represents the Muse as dispensing the same mixture to Demodocus. And it was the opinion of Maximus Tyrius, that Homer, in this short history of the Phæacian bard, gives us in reality his own.

Line 86. The poet is here supposed by Eustathius to allude to the *Iliad*.

Line 92. A city of Phocis, named also Delphi, famous for the temple and oracle of Pythian Apollo.

Line 98. Agamemnon having inquired at Delphi, at what time the Trojan war should end, was answered, that the conclusion of it should happen at a time when a dispute should arise between two of his principal commanders. That dispute occurred at a time here alluded to; Achilles recommending force as most likely to reduce the city, and Ulysses stratagem.

Line 136. The Phæacians being a maritime people, these names are all derived from maritime subjects.

Line 156. In boxing.

Line 534. Helen, after the death of Paris, is said to have been married to Deiphobus. The tradition affords at least a probable reason for the assault of his house in particular.

Line 651. The story of the Trojan horse is artfully introduced, that Ulysses weeping at the recital of it, and being questioned concerning the cause of his tears, an easy and natural introduction may be afforded to the narrative of his adventures.

Line 676. The parents had by law not only a power to name their child, but also to give him a new name afterward, proclaiming it by the public crier.

BOOK IX. *Line 12.* Lucian ludicrously considers it as a demonstrative proof, that the life of a parasite, or one who subsists at another's table, is supremely happy; that Homer, the wisest of poets, introduces the wise Ulysses admiring the spectacle here described as the pleasantest that the Earth affords. But Plato is very angry with Homer on account of this sentiment, and, asking if this be a lesson of temperance fit for a youth to study, swears by Jupiter, that in his opinion it is not. His indignation, however, seems rather unreasonable; since it is plainly a speech of complaisance merely, and designed to gratify Alcinoüs, the king of a voluptuous people. Thus Megacrides and Hermogenes considered it, and thus Eustathius; and, thus understood, it is a strong instance of the poet's attention to character, who so often extols the prudence of Ulysses.

Line 38. So called from Aia, a city of Colchis.

Line 49. Because they had been allies of Priam.

Line 70. The whole number of the slain was seventy-two; for it appears afterward, that his barks were twelve.

Line 74. It was customary, when any died in a foreign land, for the survivors, using certain ceremonies at the same time, to invoke them by name, that they might thus seem, even though their bodies were left behind, to have them still in their company.

Line 93. Malea was a promontory, and Cythera an island of Laconia.

Line 97. Meninx is supposed to have been the land of the Lotophagi mentioned by Homer. Some indications of it are shown there, such as the altar built by Ulysses, and the very fruit he found; for it abounds with a sort of tree, which the inhabitants call the lotus, the fruit of which has the most agreeable flavour.

Line 384. It was necessary to choose them by lot; lest those whom he left, had he chosen his assistants otherwise, should have thought themselves under-

valued ; or those whom he had taken, have complained of being selected for a service of so much danger.

Line 477. Outis, as a *name*, could only denote him who bore it; but as a *noun*, it signifies *no man*, which accounts sufficiently for the ludicrous mistake of his brethren.

BOOK X. *Line 1.* The Æolian isles, commonly so called, were in the Tyrrhene sea, and not far from Sicily. But whether one of those is here intended, or a distinct one, perhaps of the poet's creation, is doubted by the commentators.

Line 33. The poet is supposed to have bound these bags with silver twine, that the mistake of the mariners, who imagined them filled with treasure, might seem more probable.

Line 37. They kindled fires on the coast for the information of navigators, the fire itself serving them as a signal by night, and the smoke by day. This was the smoke which Ulysses, while detained by Calypso, so ardently wished to see.

Line 110. Which accounts for the destruction of the fleet, the difficulty of the egress rendering their escape impracticable.

Line 158. The word has the authority of Shakspeare, and signifies over-hanging.

Line 169. Æetes was king of Colchis, and father of Medea.

Line 282. He feared a snare from the singularity of all that he observed; wild beasts tractable as spaniels, and a person, woman in appearance, and all alone, inviting so many men unknown to her, without discovering the smallest apprehension.

Line 360. Mercury was the God of instruction, and moly is an allegorical plant, by which instruction or salutary discipline is intended.

Line 618. Acheron signifies the river of wo, Pyriphlegethon the river that burns with fire, Cocytus the river of wailing, and Styx, of hatred.

BOOK XI. *Line 14.* A people who inhabited the shore of the Bosphorus, where they are said to have dwelt in excavations of the earth, communicating with each other by subterraneous passages. Strabo says, that they subsisted partly by mining for metals, and partly by prophecy; they had an oracle at a great depth underground, and those of them whose business it was in particular to attend it, never saw the sun, emerging from their caverns only in the night.

Line 54. Because Ulysses himself departed not from the trench he had opened, but stood guarding the blood continually, according to the instruction given him by Circe.

Line 92. It was a prevalent opinion among the Greeks, that the shades of the unburied dead were not permitted to mix with the shades of others. The scholiast observes, that he saw not those who had been devoured by the Cyclops or the Læstrygonians, because they, however horrible their sepulture, had yet a tomb.

Line 102. The tradition is, that, unable to endure the long absence of her son, she hanged herself.

Line 129. The shore of Sicily, commonly called Trinacria, but *euphonice* by Homer, Thrinacia. It took this name from its three promontories, Pelorus, Pachynus, and Lilybæum.

Line 153. Evidently with a view to appease and propitiate Neptune, who would thus see a nation, lately ignorant of the sea and of all maritime affairs, instructed in them by Ulysses, suddenly become his votaries.

Line 156. Mistaking the oar for a corn-van. A sure indication of his ignorance of maritime concerns.

Line 206. Death by a *slow* malady, and death by the *shafts of Dian*, are set in opposition to each other: a sudden death being always signified by the latter.

Line 226. The death of Anticlea seems to have happened prior to the intrusion of the suitors, and the havoc they made of his substance.

Line 238. The comparison is between her grief and that of Laertes, not between the effects of it. His grief enfeebles and wears him out gradually; hers impelled her at once to an act of desperation. She is silent, however, concerning the manner of her death, on account of the guilty nature of it, which would have shocked her son, had she owned it.

Line 285. Enipeus was a river of Elis, which also ran through Thessaly.

Line 231. By the tragedians called Jocasta.

Line 360. Iphicles had been informed by the Oracles, that he should have no children till instructed by a prophet how to obtain them; a service which Melampus had the good fortune to render him.

Line 367. Castor being slain by Meleager, or by Polyneices, and Pollux being immortal, the latter entreated Jupiter that his brother might share his immortality with him, and that they might alternately ascend to Olympus and sink into the shades. Thus the mythologists allegorized the alternate appearance and disappearance of the two stars named Castor and Pollux, one of which declines into the southern hemisphere, while the other is seen in ours.

Line 382. Ossa and Pelion were mountains of Thessaly. Olympus was a mountain of Macedonia.

Line 393. Phædra was the daughter of Minos, and wife of Theseus; Procris was the daughter of Erec-

theus.—Dia was an island near to Crete, and was afterward called Naxos. It was sacred to Bacchus. Bacchus, therefore, accused her to Diana of having received the embraces of Theseus in his temple there, and the Goddess punished her with death.

Line 397. Mæra was the daughter of Prætus and Anteia, and died a virgin. Clymene was the daughter of Minyus, son of Neptune and of Euryanassa, and was married to Phylacus. Eriphyle was the daughter of Iphis; bribed by a golden ornament, which she received either from Polynices or Adrastus, she betrayed her husband. Knowing as a prophet the event, he feared to go to the siege of Thebes, and, in consequence of her treachery, was constrained to go. His name was Amphiaraus.

Line 466. Clytemnestra.

Line 487. Having attempted himself the same thing at Ismarus, but unsuccessfully, and with the loss of many of his companions, he naturally suspects that Agamemnon might have fallen in a similar enterprise.

Line 521. Homer more than once tells us, that Clytemnestra was never married till to Agamemnon; but Euripides, says Eustathius, knew the contrary, who affirms that she was married first to Tantalus.

Line 536. And yet, not because she was a woman, but because she was a wicked one, Clytemnestra thus dealt with her husband, and woman is not on her account to be deemed less worthy of trust than man.

Line 552. This is, surely, one of the most natural strokes to be found in any poet. Convinced, for a moment, by the virtues of Penelope, he mentions her with respect; but, recollecting himself suddenly, involves even her in his general ill opinion of the sex, begotten in him by the crimes of Clytemnestra.

Line 576. This is plainly the import of the word ἀφραδέες, since none of them knew Ulysses, or could articulate, till they had drunk at the trench; after which they were inspired by Proserpine, and enabled to converse with him.

Line 613. Another most beautiful stroke of nature. Ere yet Ulysses has had opportunity to answer, the very thought that Peleus may possibly be insulted, fires him, and he takes the whole for granted. Thus is the impetuous character of Achilles sustained to the last moment!

Line 619. This Ulysses did after the death of Achilles, for while he lived his son was not among the besiegers. Scyros was a city of Dolopia.

Line 635. The Ceteans were a people of Mysia, and Telephus was their king.

Line 664. Asphodel was planted on the graves, and around the tombs of the deceased, and hence the sup-

position, that the Stygian plain was clothed with asphodel.

Line 667. Agamemnon, desirous not to seem partial to either of the competitors for the armour of Achilles, assembling the Trojan captives, asked them whether Ajax or Ulysses had occasioned most lamentation in their city. They replied that their city had suffered most by Ulysses. When taking that as a just criterion of their respective merits, to Ulysses he gave the armour. The consequence to Ajax was such insupportable disappointment and mortification, that he slew himself.

Line 718. A city of Phocis.

Line 721. The offence of Tantalus was insatiable greediness; for not contented to banquet with the Gods himself, he also stole their nectar and ambrosia, and gave them to his companions.

Line 740. A thong was attached to the belt, and the sword was suspended by it.

Line 776. The first two lines of the following book seem to ascertain the true meaning of the conclusion of this, and to prove sufficiently that by *'Ωκεανός* here Homer could not possibly intend any other than a river. In these lines he tells us in the plainest terms, that *the ship left the stream of the river Oceanus, and arrived in the open sea.* Diodorus Siculus informs us, that *'Ωκεανός* had been a name anciently given to the Nile.

BOOK XII. *Line 47.* The Sirens, according to many, were the daughters of Acheloüs and Sterope, but others call them the daughters of Acheloüs and Terpsichore, one of the Muses. Choosing to live virgins, they were hated by Venus, and, having wings, flew to Anthemusa, an island of the Tyrrhene sea. Their names were Aglaophema, Thelxiepia, and Pisinoë; but Homer allows only two, mentioning then in the dual number.

Line 72. These rocks are understood to be those called the Cyanean, or Symplegades, from *συμπλήσσειν*, which signifies *to dash together*. For, standing at small distance from each other, to those who approached them in a right line they appeared two; but, seen in an oblique direction, had the appearance of approximation, till at last they seemed to meet. They were therefore fabulously said to clash, and were denominated *The rocks of collision*.

Line 77. While Jupiter was an infant, a cave in Crete was his nursery, where he was attended by doves, who brought him ambrosia in their bills, and by a vast eagle, which supplied him in the same place with nectar. The God, having subdued and tamed the latter, assigned him an abode in Heaven, and the doves h

made his harbingers to announce the approach of summer and winter.

Line 117. The history of Scylla, divested of the fable, according to Palæphatus, was simply this. A three-banked galley belonging to an island in the Tyrrhene sea, and named Scylla, with the aid of as many ships as she could procure to assist her, plundered the coasts of Sicily, and of the bay of Ionia, so frequently, that she caused in those parts much talk and general consternation. Ulysses, by the help of a strong and fair wind, had the good fortune to escape when this galley chased him.

Line 120. The fig-tree is mentioned here, because it will soon be wanted for the preservation of the hero.

Line 145. Others make Scylla the daughter of Phorcys and Hecate.

Line 247. Ulysses assumes to himself the honour of their deliverance from the Cyclops, not in the spirit of self-praise and vain-glory, but to confirm their confidence in him the more. For confidence in their leader is often the salvation of his followers.

Line 295. They passed the line through a pipe of horn, to secure it against the bite of the fish.

Line 512. He had therefore held by the fig-tree from sun-rise till afternoon.

Line 518. Strabo contends that Circe misinformed Ulysses; for she assured him, that if he arrived at Charybdis at the time when she ingulfed the water, Neptune himself could not deliver him. He arrives there, however, at that very time, and nevertheless escapes. But Circe gave him that caution on a supposition, that, if he arrived there at all, it must be in his ship, and his escape by means of the wild fig, when the timbers on which he had floated thither were actually swallowed up, is no impeachment of the truth of her intelligence.

BOOK XIII. *Line 93.* Thus it was they moored their galleys, passing the cable through a rock perforated for this purpose, and lashing it fast about.

Line 137. They landed him in his sleep, either that they might not seem to expect a recompense, which would have been the case had they waked him, or that they might not be detained by him.

Line 149. For Phæax, founder of the race, was son of Neptune and Corcyra, the daughter of Asopus.

Line 444. The olive was sacred to Pallas, who was the patroness of that tree in particular. The Goddess therefore and Ulysses, consulting together, could not have found a seat more suitable.

Line 486. So called from a hunter of that name, who, in pursuit of his sport, fell from the summit of this

rock and died. His mother, Arethusa, inconsolable for his death, strangled herself. Four fountains bore her name—One in Syracuse, one in Smyrna, one in Calcis, and this in Ithaca,

Line 524. Here it is, as Madame Dacier observes, that the poet returns to the matter from which he has digressed ever since we quitted Telemachus at the end of the fourth book. In the nine succeeding books has been related all that befell Ulysses after his departure from Troy till his arrival in Ithaca. And it is a proof of the poet's art, she says, which merits our admiration. The action of the *Odyssey* was too long to be continued in a regular series.—Homer therefore has had recourse to an artificial order, beginning his poem with an enumeration of such incidents as happened last, and returning from them to others of an earlier date.

BOOK XIV. *Line 121.* Herds consisting, no doubt, of horses as well as of oxen; for the word ἀγέλη is used to express a number of either.

Line 122. It may be proper to suggest, that Ulysses was lord of part of the continent opposite to Ithaca—viz.—of the peninsula Nericus, or Leuca, which afterward became an island, and is now called Santa Maura.

Line 335. Sethos is said to have been at that time king of Ægypt.

Line 382. Thesprotia was a city on the border of Thessaly; and, though Ulysses here gives them a king, they are said by Thucydides to have had none.

Line 391. This oracle anciently belonged to the Thesprotians, but afterward to the Molossi.

Line 527. Mercury.

BOOK XV. *Line 19.* Apollodorus informs us, that Icarius had by his wife Peribœa, the Neïd or Naiad, five sons, Thoas, Damasippus, Imensimus, Aletes, and Perileos.—He then mentions his daughter Penelope, but takes no notice of her sister Iphthima.

Line 141. See the Fourth Book, where this cup is promised.

Line 277. Her name was Pero.

Iphiclus, the son of Phylacus, had seized and detained cattle belonging to Neleus; Neleus ordered his nephew Melampus to recover them, and as security for his obedience seized on a considerable part of his possessions. Melampus attempted the service, failed, and was cast into prison; but at length, escaping, accomplished his errand, vanquished Neleus in battle, and carried off his daughter Pero, whom Neleus had promised to the brother of Melampus, but had afterward refused her.

Line 284. His brother's name was Bias.

Line 295. As a royal character he was beloved by Jupiter. All such were therefore called *διογενέες* and *διοτρεφέες*—and as a prophet he was dear to Apollo.

Line 298. His wife Eryphyle, bribed by Polynices, persuaded him, though aware that death awaited him at that city, to go to Thebes, where he fell accordingly.

Line 362. Those islands of the Echinades are intended, which were near to the opening of the bay of Corinth and the mouth of the Acheloüs.

Line 422. She is said to have hanged herself.

Line 438. Sister of Ulysses.

Line 488. Not improbably the isthmus of Syracuse; an island, perhaps, or peninsula, at that period, or at least imagined to be such by Homer. The birth of Diana gave fame to Ortygia.

Line 514. A principal city of Phœnicia.

Line 599. The anchors were lodged on the shore, not plunged as ours.

Line 655. The Ægyptians seem to have consecrated the hawk to Apollo, whom in their language they name Orus; for they affirm, that the hawk visits him; an opinion founded on the nature of the bird, which delights to soar aloft, and has, of all others, the steadiest and most undazzled sight when the sun shines with brightest splendour.

BOOK XVI. *Line 308.* The suitors according to this reckoning were in number one hundred and eight, with eight servants beside the herald and the bard; in all one hundred and eighteen.

Line 373. For Ulysses had servants not only in Ithaca, but on the continent, who could not be visited and put to the proof individually, but at the cost of much time. The advice of Telemachus therefore is good, and the poet recommends him by it to our respect, as a son worthy of so wise a father.

Line 379. If you are not secure of the divine assistance, which you have so confidently professed to expect, then indeed it may be necessary to make trial of the man-servants, and to avail yourself of the aid of those whom you shall find faithful among them. Otherwise, to put the women to the proof may be sufficient; and how they are disposed toward you, you will readily discover, since they are always on the spot. This will be a prudent measure, and to this, therefore, I make no objection.

Line 553. Mercury, having by command of Jupiter slain Argus the keeper of Iö, was brought into judgment by Juno and the other deities, as the first of their order, who had defiled himself with the blood of a mor-

tal. His judges, however, fearing lest they should offend Jupiter, if they condemned him, since in the execution of Jupiter's commands he had perpetrated the deed, acquitted him of the murder, but at the same time testified their abhorrence of the act, pelting him with their pebbles of suffrage, till they lay in a heap at his feet. It is therefore customary for travellers, because Mercury presides over the public ways, and is the tutelary God of all who use them, to raise heaps of stone to his honour, every passenger contributing to them as he goes; and these heaps they call *Ἑρμαῖος λόφος*, or hills of Mercury.

BOOK XVII. *Line 158.* The English reader is requested to observe, that the last syllable but one of this name is to be pronounced *long*.

There have been disputes concerning the person signified by it, some contending, that Patroclus is meant, the son of Philomela. But, beside that Homer never derives his patronymics from the name of the mother, it is not likely, that the fall of a person, so beloved by the Greeks as Patroclus was, should have occasioned universal joy among them. It is more probable, therefore, that some Lesbian is intended.

Line 165. Proteus.

Line 185. The hearth was the altar, on which the lares or household gods were worshipped.

Line 248. Ithacus and Neritus were sons of Pterelaus, who derived himself from Jove. At first they dwelt in Cephallenia, but, passing thence into the nearest island, and finding it, on account of its elevated form, a convenient place for the construction of a city, they built one, which, after Ithacus, was named Ithaca; a name by which afterwards the whole island was denominated; and the mountain adjoining to the city received the name of Neritus.

Line 388. The opinion of the ancients was, that Argus might have lived a little longer, had not his joy at the sight of his old master overpowered him.

Line 434. That he might begin auspiciously. Wine was served in the same direction.

Line 540. This speech is admirably adapted to the proud and injurious character of Antinous, who, while he himself sets the other suitors an example of rapine, and has no mercy on the goods of Ulysses, the moment he sees them giving a scrap to a beggar, both accuses them of profusion, and hypocritically covers his own obduracy with the pretext of equity and consideration.

Line 648. The sneeze was accounted by the ancients a favourable omen, because it proceeds from the head, the most honourable part of the person. For which reason it was customary to bow to the sneezer.

BOOK XVIII. *Line 39.* It was a law in Salamis, an island abounding with corn, that, if a swine entered a field and browsed, her teeth should be knocked out.

Line 57. A fit prize, it is observed, for two hungry combatants quarrelling for food.

Line 154. Echetus was one of the tyrants of Sicily, infamous for oppressing his subjects and murdering strangers. He had such renown for cruelty, that, when a criminal of a distant country was adjudged worthy of uncommon punishment, he was sent to Echetus; whose invention of painful and ignominious means of torture was so inexhaustible, and so wantonly exercised, that, at last, his people, unable to endure him longer, very properly stoned him.

Line 295. From Iäsus, once King of Peloponnesus.

Line 300. Aristotle's opinion, which was probably that of his countrymen, was, that to be large and tall is essential to female beauty. Diminutive persons, he says, may be elegant and justly formed, but beautiful they cannot be.—*Ethic. lib. iv. c. 7.*

Line 393. The smith's shop was a place into which the houseless poor were permitted to enter at night, and where they slept at the forge-side.

Line 415. None of Homer's incidents are without their consequences. He sends away the women, that Ulysses may have the fairer opportunity to converse with Penelope, and especially that, having withdrawn themselves, they may, by the aid of Euryclea, be effectually excluded, while the hero and his son remove the arms. A measure which, without that precaution, could hardly have been effected secretly.

Line 520. Mulius, although the servant of Amphinomus, is dignified with the appellation of hero, because he was a herald also; and all heralds were deemed sacred persons, and held in the highest honour by the ancients.

BOOK XIX. *Line 198.* When a man's birth or his ancestry could not be traced, or for reasons of his own he chose to conceal them, he was said to be descended either from the oaks or rocks. The expression was proverbial.

Line 211. The poet, who here ascribes only ninety, in the catalogue ascribes to Crete a hundred cities; the reason is said to be, that, after the Trojan war, the return of Idomeneus to his home being opposed by Leucus his adopted son, to whom he had delegated the throne in his absence, ten cities were destroyed in the contest.

Others say, that the epithet *ἐκατόπολις* is not to be understood precisely, but as a general term signifying only a great number of cities.

Line 218. Minos, the son of Jupiter and Europa, was fabulously reported to visit always at the end of nine years his omniscient father, that he might receive from him instructions in the art of government, in which accordingly he became so expert, that after his death he was appointed chief judge of the wicked.

Line 275. Hence Barnes observes on the great antiquity of Mosaic work among the Grecians, derived originally from the Sidonians, the Hebrews, the Ægyptians, and secondarily from the Medes and Persians, and the people of India.

Line 384. A gaberdine is a shaggy cloak of course but warm materials. Such always make part of Homer's bed-furniture.

Line 479. Autolycus, the son of Mercury according to the scholiast, was a most dexterous thief, after the example of his father; and so ingenious both in stealing and in hiding what he had stolen, that he amassed great riches. The poet, however, seems rather to applaud, than to censure his practice; on which account Plato cautions his disciples against the passage; telling them, that they are in danger of learning from Homer, who evidently approves the conduct and character of Autolycus, that honesty and thievery may consist together, and that, provided a man pilfers only from his enemies for the benefit of himself and his friends, no great harm is done.

Line 497. To call him Ulysses here (a name without meaning) when Autolycus calls him Odusseus for the sake of its meaning, would be not to translate, but to misrepresent the poet. Odusseus is immediately derived from the verb Odussaò, *I am angry*.

Line 555. Hæmorrhages, gout, sciatica, and all sorts of sprains, were supposed by the ancients to be curable by song, when once the patient found himself capable of attending to it.

Line 576. Dionysius Halicar. was so charmed with the poet's whole description of this incident, that while we contemplate it, he says, we rather seem to view a picture, than to read a poem, and accounts them not much mistaken, who shall affirm, that the best lessons in his art any where to be found, a painter may find in Homer. And Cicero's opinion of his descriptive powers was equally honourable to him, as appears, from what he says on the subject in his Tusculan Disputations, l. v, s. 39; where, noticing the blindness of the bard, and his faculty of making all things clearly seen by his readers, he expresses himself with rapturous admiration.

Line 634. Her name was Aëdon. She intended to slay the son of her husband's brother Amphion, incited to it by envy of his wife, who had six children, while herself had only two; but through mistake she slew her

own son Itylus, and for her punishment was transformed by Jupiter into a nightingale.

Line 681. The differences of the two substances may perhaps serve to account for the preference given in this case to the gate of horn; horn being transparent, and as such emblematical of truth; while ivory, from its whiteness, promises light, but is, in fact, opaque.

BOOK XX. *Line 48.* That is, how shall I escape the vengeance of their kindred?

Line 76. Aëdon, Cleothera, Merope.

Line 91. We have here a different history given us of Aëdon, who in Book XIX. (see the note on line 634) is said to have been transformed into a nightingale. In his comment on this passage the scholiast tells us, that Pandareus, son of Merops and the nymph Orea, having married Harmathœe, daughter of Amphidamas, by her had three daughters, Aëdon, Cleothera, and Merope. Their father, arriving in Crete, stole a dog belonging to Jupiter from his temple; and in punishment of that crime it was, that he and his wife were slain, and their three children disposed of as Penelope here mentions.

It seems strange, that two such very different catastrophes should be related of the same person; to attempt either to reconcile or to account for them would be a vain labour.

Line 184. The new moon.

Line 272. Household Gods who presided over the hearth.

Line 329. This is a public procession, and a general assembly of the people of Ithaca. They celebrate the festival in the grove of Apollo; but the suitors themselves feast as usual in the house of Ulysses, and their banquet in particular is intended in what follows.

Line 359. The scholiast informs us, that the Sardians had a barbarous law among them, according to which, on the three days which they set apart for the worship of Saturn, they not only sacrificed the most beautiful of their captives, but of their elders also, all whose age exceeded seventy years. If these victims wept when they were led to the altar, their tears were deemed dishonourable, and a proof of meanness; but if they cheerfully embraced the by-standers and laughed, they were much applauded. Hence, he says, the laughter of a man in circumstances of misery came to be called Sardonic laughter.

But Pausanias derives the expression from a poisonous herb, which, he says, grew in Sardis, of which whoever ate died laughing.

Line 417. Who had sought refuge in the ship of Telemachus, when he left Sparta, and came with him to Ithaca.

Line 433. This answer of Eurymachus will seem un-

natural to the last degree, unless the reader understand, that the prodigies enumerated by Theoclymenus are seen by himself only.

Line 445. To whom Telemachus had consigned the care of him on his first arrival.

Line 467. The women's apartment and that of the men were on opposite sides of the house.

BOOK XXI. *Line 16.* A province of Laconia.

Line 43. The scholiast relates the story thus—Iphitus, the son of Eurytus, an Œchalian by birth, having lost his mares, sought them in all the cities round about; but Polyides the prophet admonishing him not to seek them in Tiryntha, for that he would do it to his hurt, he despised the caution, and sought them there also; when Hercules dragging him to the battlements of his city, cast him down headlong, having a quarrel with him and his father, who, on his return from Hell, where he had bound Cerberus, refused him his promised bride Iöla, and dismissed him scornfully.

But according to Spondanus, whose opinion Clarke approves, the more probable reason, for which he slew Iphitus, was, lest he should discover the stolen mares. It seems at least to be the reason assigned by Homer, who says

ἔπειτα δὲ πέφνε καὶ αὐτόν·

Ἴππης δ' αὐτὸς ἔχε κρατερώνυχας ἐν μεγάροισιν.

Not that Hercules stole them himself, for they were stolen by Autolycus, as Eustathius informs us, from whom Hercules bought them; conscious however that they were stolen.

Line 56. The reader will of course observe, that the whole of this process implies a sort of mechanism, very different from that with which we are acquainted.—The translation, I believe, is exact.

Line 145. Because, at the time when Ulysses used this pastime, Telemachus was either not born, or merely an infant, since such his father left him when he went to Troy.

Line 149. This first attempt of Telemachus and the suitors was not an attempt to shoot, but to lodge the bow-string on the opposite horn, the bow having been released at one end, and slackened while it was laid by.

Line 167. Antinous prescribes to them this manner of rising to the trial for the good omen's sake, the left hand being held unpropitious.

Line 171. The place where the beaker stood, and consequently the cup-bearer's place, was at the extremity of the room. There it was that Leiodes constantly sat, and he was therefore the proper person to make the first trial, according to the direction of Antinous.

Line 221. They probably reserved themselves for a later trial, that, others having had an opportunity to prove their insufficiency, their own superior force might be evident, if they succeeded. Had they made an earlier attempt, and a successful one, others might have had room to boast, that they could have done the like, had they not been anticipated.

Line 304. The meaning of this pretext seems to be, that archership being in peculiar the attribute of Phœbus, to attempt a proof of theirs on a day devoted to his worship, would be to expose themselves to his jealousy and resentment.

Line 348. When Pirithoüs, one of the Lapithæ, married Hippodamia, daughter of Adrastus, he invited the Centaurs to the wedding. The Centaurs, intoxicated with wine, attempted to ravish the wives of the Lapithæ, who, in resentment of that insult, slew them.

Line 411. Dulichium, Zacynthus, Samos, &c.

Line 455. This is a misrepresentation of the fact, for he had not received his commission from Telemachus, but from Ulysses; it is, however, a prudent one, and to Eumæus, who knew not that Euryclea was already apprised of the arrival of her master, must have appeared indispensably necessary.

Line 508. This is an instance of the *Σαρδάνιον μάλα τοῖον* mentioned in Book XX.; such as, perhaps, could not be easily paralleled. I question if there be a passage, either in ancient or modern tragedy, so truly terrible as this seeming levity of Ulysses, in the moment when he was going to begin the slaughter.

BOOK XXII. *Line 26.* For Ulysses and Telemachus had removed them all, as the reader has already seen in the nineteenth book, at the beginning.

Line 111. Courage depends much on the habit of encountering danger. This is the first exploit of Telemachus. It is therefore with singular attention to nature, that the poet represents him wounding his enemy from behind, and starting back again to his father's side as soon as he has done it.

Line 150. At which Ulysses stood.

Line 163. Hence it was, that the ancients supposed there was another postern, beside that which was guarded by Eumæus; a postern leading to the chamber in which the arms and armour were deposited.

Line 346. The *œstrum* or gadfly, according to the scholiast, is bred from an animalcule, with which water abounds, for which reason it is chiefly found in marshy places.

Line 387. So called because he was worshipped within the *ἔρκος* or wall that surrounded the court.

Line 481. In the nineteenth book, see l. 607, when

Euryclea made a voluntary offer of such information, Ulysses refuses to hear it, because at that time it was not wanted; but now it is become necessary; for which reason he now demands what he declined before.

BOOK XXIII. *Line 212.* The proof consisted in this—that the bed, being attached to the stump of an olive tree still rooted, was immoveable; and Ulysses having made it himself, no person present, he must needs be apprised of the impossibility of her orders, if he were indeed Ulysses: accordingly, this demonstration of his identity satisfies all her scruples.

Line 268. Penelope, having tried her husband's patience by her long delay to acknowledge him, makes him ample compensation at last, rejoicing in him with rapture, enfolding him in her arms, supplicating him to pardon her tedious hesitation, accounting and apologizing for it, complimenting him with an eulogium, short indeed, but such as the time allowed, and commiserating the woes he had suffered in his wanderings.

Line 321. See the note on the same passage, Book XI. l. 156.

Line 346. Aristophanes the grammarian and Aristarchus chose that the Odyssey should end here; but the story is not properly concluded till the tumult occasioned by the slaughter of so many princes being composed, Ulysses finds himself once more in peaceable possession of his country. The sequel is likewise necessary on another account, the poet himself having prepared us to expect it. See line 160 of this book.

Line 432. That, seeming ignorant of all that had passed, she might be deemed innocent by the angry multitude, and suffer no injury from them.

BOOK XXIV. *Line 1.* Cyllene was a mountain of Arcadia; and Mercury, being worshipped with particular honours by those who dwelt in the neighbourhood of it, had thence the epithet Cyllenius.

Line 97. Strabo testifies, that the temple and tomb of Achilles were to be seen in his time on the promontory of Sigæum; the tombs also of Patroclus and Antilochus, to whom as well as to Ajax the Trojans offered sacrifice.

Line 114. See the story related at large by Agamemnon to Ulysses.

Line 140. Because Ulysses, not through fear, but by dint of his own forecast and sagacity knowing well the difficulties of such a war, was unwilling to engage in it. On which account probably it was, as Eustathius observes, that Agamemnon, while he was in Ithaca, dwelt with Melanthius, and not with Ulysses.

Line 256. The poet artfully contrives to dispose thus of Telemachus and the servants, that the interview be-

tween Ulysses and his father may be free from all constraint and interruption.

Line 355. Alybas, in the catalogue called Alybe, was according to some a city of Italy, named also Metapontus; but according to others a city of Thrace.

Line 400. The fruit is here used for the tree that bore it, as it is in the Greek; the Latins used the same mode of expression, neither is it uncommon in our language.

Line 445. Nericus is understood by Strabo to have been the same with Leucas; it was once joined to the continent; but the Corinthians, cutting off the isthmus, made an island of it.

THE END.

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